

THE
BHAGAVADGEETA

VOLUME II

With a foreword by K. S. Ramaswami Sastri

Text in Sanskrit followed by Roman transliteration,
word for word translation, a general paraphrase and
exhaustive discourses upon each stanza.

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Part A

SREEMAD³ BHAGAVAD GEETA

CHAPTER VI

With this chapter we are coming to the close of a definite section in the scheme of thought in the Geeta. This is the opinion of some of the well-known critics and students of the Lord's Song. According to them the entire eighteen chapters of the Geeta can fall into three definite sections each of six chapters, and they group themselves to expound the implications and significances of the sacred Vedic mantra *Tat Twam Asi*—"That Thou Art". The first six chapters together constitute in their contents an explanation of the philosophical significance indicated by the word "Thou" (*Twam*). In the general scheme of thought developed in that section, the contents of chapter six constitute a fitting conclusion.

In Chapter II, in a language almost foreign to Arjuna, in quick strokes, Lord Krishna painted the philosophical perfection which is the theme of all the Upanishads. He concluded that chapter with a vivid and expressive picture of a Saint of Perfection and mental equipoise. Naturally, the interest of a seeker is excited and he seeks to find means and methods by which he too can grow within himself into those diviner heights of self-control and equipoise.

The Geeta is personally and specifically addressed to Arjuna, a confused average man at a moment when he felt completely confounded by the problem that was facing him. Naturally, the highest methods of subtle meditation or the mental drills by which each can

renounce all its preoccupations, etc., are not easy methods which can be practised with confidence. At the same time, it will not be true to say that Vedantic methods are meant only for a few; if it is immediately useful only for the rare, there must be in Vedanta preliminary techniques by which everyone can steadily grow to become fit to enter the Hall of Perfection.

That there are graded lessons for the spiritual unfoldment is not really understood by the modern lip-Vedantins. It is this general ignorance that has brought the misconception in Hinduism that the Study of the Vedas are the guarded preserves of some rare ones. And Vedanta would have been an incomplete science if it did not contain *Upasana* methods for purifying the students' inner equipments.

Krishna as a true teacher understood Arjuna's mental debilities and intellectual incompetency at that particular moment to start right away the arduous lines of pure meditation and clear detached thinking. In order to bring him to the level of perfection, various lower methods of self-integration are to be prescribed in the treatment of Arjuna. Thus in Chapter III we found an exhaustively scientific treatment of the *Karma Yoga*—the Path of Action.

Activities in the outer world, however noble they may be in their motive, cannot but leave deep ulcerations and painful restlessness in the bosom of the worker. To mitigate the "reactions" of actions (*Karma-Phalam*), as a balm to soothen the bleeding mental wounds, new methods of maintaining the mind in quietude and ease had been expounded in Chapter IV under the title "*Renunciation of Action in Knowledge*". By constantly maintaining in the mind, the awareness of the greater principle that presides over all human endeavours, it is the theory of Krishna that the worker can, even in the

thick of activities, maintain a healthy and well-ventilated inner life.

Naturally, the limited intellect of Arjuna got extremely confused since his teacher argued in the beginning for "action" and in the conclusion for "the renunciation of action". In Chapter V, therefore, the *Way of Renunciation* is explained and the technique of guaranteeing immunity from reactions to our mind even while it is engaged in activity is explained. The "Yagna-spirit"—the spirit of self-dedicated activity for the benefit of the larger majority and not for any self-arrogating profit—is the antiseptic that Krishna prescribes for a mind and intellect that is to work in the world. In Chapter IV, an unavoidable treatment is prescribed for the mind for curing its own pox of painful "impressions of the past" (*Vasanas*).

In Chapter V, the *Way of Renunciation* is explained under two different categories, which show the two methods of achieving the same goal. Renunciation of (a) our sense of agency in activities, and (b) our unintelligent anxieties arising out of our thoughtless pre-occupations with the fruits-of-our-action. The chapter exhausts these two techniques and explains how by the renunciation of agency or by the renunciation of our attachment to the fruits-of-action, we can come to gain a release from the *Vasana* bondages, which generally reach to shackle our personality during our activities.

One who can faithfully follow the technique so far unravelled by the Lord should have thereby come to a condition wherein the insentient and inert mind has been stirred into a field of intense activity. A mind developed through the training is taught to come under the intelligent will of its determined trainer, the very seeker. The mind thus broken and trained is certainly a better equipped instrument for the higher purposes of Self-contemplation and Self-unfoldment.

How this is done through the famous technique of meditation is in a nutshell the theme of the sixth chapter. During our discussions we shall not stand in sheer surprise and wonderment and swallow down the ideas in the verses without dissecting, discovering, analysing and understanding every facet of each of the ideas. This chapter promises to give us all the means by which we can give up our own known weaknesses and positively grow into a healthier and more potent life of virtue and strength. This technique is called meditation, which in one form or the other is the common method advocated and advised in all religions by all prophets at all times in the history of man.

ओं श्रीपरमात्मने नमः

अथ षष्ठोऽध्यायः

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरश्निर् चाक्रियः ॥

SRIBHAGAVAN UVACA

1. *anasritah karmaphalam*
karyam karma karoti yah
sa sannyasi ca yogi ca
na niragnir na ca kriyah

अनाश्रितः - Not depending (on), कर्मफलम् - fruit of action, कार्यम् - bounden, कर्म - duty, करोति - performs, यः - who, सः - he, संन्यासी - Sanyasi (ascetic), च - and, योगी - Yogi, च - and, न - not,

निरग्निः - without fire, न - not, च - and, अक्रियः - without action.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID :

1. He who performs his bounden duty without depending on the fruits-of-action—he is a *Sannyasin* and a *Yogin* ; not he who is without (has renounced) fire and without action.

Apart from what we said in the introduction, another school of thought classifies the Geeta and attributes the first six chapters, to what is called *Karma Kanda* in the Vedas. According to them the second bulk of six chapters in the Geeta constitutes the *Upasana Kanda* and the last team of six chapters represents the *Gyana Kanda* of the Vedas. Accepting this classification for the time being, we can appreciate Sree Sankara's insistence that this opening stanza of the chapter is a glorification of the householder, who pursues his life of ritualism in a spirit of service and dedication unto the Lord.

To accept the view that Krishna is here advocating or glorifying the life of ritualism would be a contradiction to the background against which the Geeta has been so laboriously woven out. In the Lord's Song, Krishna is advising Arjuna—a misinformed Prince, who was trying to behave against his own culture. The warrior is now standing in the battlefront wanting to run away and Krishna, his friend and charioteer, is trying to persuade the Pandava Prince to stick to his bow-and-arrow. At this juncture, to assume that the Lord is glorifying "God-dedicated performance of domestic ritualism" would be a miserable contradiction.

Directly read, the stanza clearly gives its simple meaning, and no annotation seems necessary. Without much coaxing, the verse readily smiles forth its meaning

to any clear thinking reader. So far, we have been discussing in the previous chapters, two parallel ideas running a neck to neck race for importance, *viz.*, "renunciation of the sense of agency" (*Sanyas*) and the "renunciation of attachment to the fruits-of-action" (*Yoga*). Naturally in this chapter, in the very opening stanza, Bhagavan had to indicate that the "*Sanyasi*" is himself the "*Yogi*", and that seekers must, therefore, tirelessly employ themselves in noble endeavours, renouncing both their sense of agency and their anxiety for the fruits-of-action.

Arjuna's plan, in his own words in the first chapter, was to escape the battlefield in order to live the *Sanyas*-life. He did not know that a true *Yogi* (selfless worker) is himself the greatest *Sanyasi*, for, without renunciation, his action would become at best only a mischievous meddling with the harmony of the Universe.

As a revivalist of Hinduism, Vyasa cannot stop with merely putting this idea into the mouth of Lord Krishna. The missionary zeal with which the Geeta has been expounded demands a direct hit on the existing misunderstanding in the days of Arjuna regarding true renunciation. In the Mahabharata time, *Sanyas* has come to symbolise crudely a formal exterior without the soft perfections of the within. Mere external symbolism has come to mark *Sanyas* without its accompaniments of mental purity and intellectual equipoise, which must ever be the real badges of a true renouncer. Arjuna had a feeling that *Sanyas* meant renunciation of activities, symbolised here, in the language of those days as Fire, and, thereafterwards, living without any duty or work.

To escape from the buzzle of life, in our present state of unpreparedness, into the quiet atmosphere of the banks of the Ganges is only a fall of an average good man to the level of the insentient stone in the very Ganges. At the close of this verse, Krishna laughs at Arjuna's sad

misconceptions. There is no bitterness in the irony of the Lord. Soon we shall find that Arjuna also comes to laugh at his own misunderstandings.

The whole chapter is so fully and entirely dedicated to expounding the technique of cultivation, direction and application of the inner forces of thoughts and feelings that it is very appropriate for Krishna to indicate the greater importance of revolutionising our inner motives and mental attitudes, before one enters the Path of Spirituality.

As an elucidating annotation for the quibble which the Lord had declared in this stanza, we have his added explanations in the following which shows how Sanyas itself is Yoga.

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन । २ ।

2. *yam sannnyasam iti prahur
yogam tam viddhi pandava
na hy asamnyastasamkalpo
yogi bhavati kascana*

यम् - Which, संन्यासम् - renunciation, इति - thus, प्राहुः - (they) call, योगम् - Yoga, तम् - that, विद्धि - know, पाण्डव - O Pandava, न - not, हि - verily, असंन्यस्तसंकल्पः - one who has not renounced thoughts, योगी - Yogi, भवति - becomes, कश्चन - anyone.

2. O Pandava, please know Yoga to be that which they call renunciation ; no one verily becomes a Yogi who has not renounced thoughts.

Repeating the same idea again lest Arjuna should overlook the fact that what they call as *Sanyasa*, the "renunciation of agency" is itself *Yoga*, the "renunciation of the fruits-of-action". *Sanyasa* is the state reached through *Yoga*, the practice, and the spiritual practice of *Yoga* cannot even be thought of without the spirit of *Sanyas* in the bosom. One is the obverse and the other the reverse of the same coin of spiritual perfection.

It is but natural that the intellectually independent thinker in Arjuna should at this juncture ask the question "Why?" with his raised brows, seeing which the charioteer implicitly gives the logical reasons behind his seemingly outrageous and daring conclusion. The Lord explains that never can one become established in the practices of one's own cultural rehabilitation unless one learns the art of renouncing all *sankalpas*.

Unfortunately the term *sankalpa* cannot be translated in the language in which we are now talking. Language is a medium of expression discovered by a people to exchange their ideas and ideologies. The Englishman has not yet penetrated deeper than his flesh in his scientific study of life and, therefore, the term *sankalpa*, which belongs to the world of the mind and intellect, has not yet been crystallized by this language into any familiar single sound-symbol. However, we can try to give our readers a hazy notion of what all constitute the term *sankalpa*.

Man cannot remain ordinarily without imagining and constantly creating in his exuberant fancy. And in his imagination he invariably tries to pull down the beautiful veil thrown over the face of the future. Ripping open this veil over the Unknown, everyone of us on all occasions in our imaginations fix for ourselves a goal to be fulfilled by us in the near future. Having fixed up the temporary goal, our mind plans and creates a method of

achieving that hazy goal. But ere we execute our plans and enter into the field of effort to carve out a success to ourselves, the never-tiring and ever-active power of imagination in us would have already wiped clean the earlier-fixed-goal for achievement and have rewritten a modified destination to be gained in the future.

Again by the time we prepare ourselves mentally and start executing our ideas in our life, our mischievous fancy would have already wiped clean the distant goal. Thus, each time the goal remains only so long as we have not started our pilgrimage to it; and the moment we start the pilgrimage the goal fades away from our vision!

In short, when we have got a goal we have not started acting, and the moment we start the strife we seem to have no goal to reach. The subtle force in our inner composition which unconsciously creates this lunatic temperament in us is called the unbridled *Sankalpa Sakti*.

We need no help from any great commentators to understand that no achievement either without or within us can be gained by any one so long as we have not pursued, arrested, and finally destroyed this dangerous inner saboteur called *Sankalpa*.

To show that there is no compromise in this, Bhagavan is using a very positive term that none (*Kascana*) can ever reach any progress on the path of self-redemption without acquiring for oneself a capacity to renounce this self-poisoning *Sankalpa*-disturbances.

“Karma Yoga, practised without regard to the fruit of action forms an external aid (Bahiranga sadhana) to Dhyana Yoga.” Lord now proceeds to show how Karma Yoga is a means to better and greater meditation.”

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते । ३ ।

3. *aruruksor muner yogam*
 karma karanam ucyate
 yogarudhasya tasyai va
 samah karanam ucyate

आरुरुक्षोः - Wishing to climb, मुनेः - of a Muni or sage, योगम् - Yoga, कर्म - action, कारणम् - the cause, उच्यते - is said, योगारूढस्य - of one who has attained (to Yoga), तस्य - of him, एव - even, शमः - inaction (quiescence), कारणम् - the cause, उच्यते - is said.

3. For a *Muni* or sage who "wishes to attain to Yoga," action is said to be the means ; for the same sage who has "attained to Yoga" inaction (quiescence) is said to be the means.

To one who is "*desiring to scale over the practice of mental concentration and self-improvement, work is said to be the means.*" By working in the world with neither the ego-centric concept of agency nor the ego-centric desires for the fruits of those actions, we are creating within ourselves a convenient atmosphere for the existing *vasanas* to play out without creating any new precipitate of fresh impression."¹

The metaphor used here is borrowed from riding and it is very powerful in its suggestions. Before we ride over a steed which is wild, to an extent it drives you rather than the other way. For one who desires to bring a steed under his own perfect control, there is a period when, with one leg on the stirrup the individual has to

¹ Refer General Introductions.

hang on to the saddle, and with the other leg on the ground must learn to kick himself off from the ground and spring up to throw his legs over the back of the animal, until the rider sits with the steed completely between his own legs. Having mounted, it is easy to control the animal, but till then the rider in his attempt to mount the horse must pass through a stage where he is neither totally on the horse nor on the ground.

In the beginning we are merely workers in the world, —desire-prompted and ego-driven we sweat and toil, weep and sob. When an individual gets tired of such activities he comes to desire to mount the steed of his mind. Such an individual desiring to bring the mind under his control and ride over it (*Aruruksha*) takes up to himself the same work as before, but without his ego and his ego-centric desires. Such desireless activities undertaken in the *Yagna*-spirit, explained earlier² cleans the mind of its past impressions and integrates the entire inner equipment. When thus the required amount of concentration has been gained by the individual as a result of the *vasana*-purgation effected, he is to stop his activities slowly and apply himself more and more to live in deeper meditation. When once his mind has been conquered, and his agitations have become well controlled the seeker in that state of mental growth and development is termed as “having mounted the steed of the mind” (*Yoga-Aruda*). To such an individual, at that state of his mental equipoise and self-application “quiescence” (*Sama*) is the means for gaining a higher perfection and self-growth.

By thus describing two means at the two distinct stages of the individual's growth, it is meant that they are not contradictory. Selfless activity is good at a stage and afterwards it becomes a positive agitation which brings the mind down from its serener flights frequently,

² Chapter IV, stanzas 18, 19, 20, 21 and 25 to 30.

to bump on the ground with a shattering shock. Specially prepared milk powder diluted with hot water is the full diet for an infant. But the same feeding-bottle will not satisfy the growing demands of a boy vigorously working and mischievously knocking about all the day around. To him more solid bread and butter is the diet. We need not be great intellectuals to understand that buttered toast at the same time would choke and kill an infant child.

Similarly, here, work without self is healthy for the beginner, but a developed seeker needs more and more quietude and self-withdrawal for growing in his steady contemplation of the life within. Earlier, 'work-without-self' is the means, afterwards 'work on Self' is the means : and the process is continued until, working or not working, through meditation it is realised that the Self alone is the essence in the ego which till then was recognised as the only reality.

In this sense of the term we can clearly know how ritualism has a definite place in the scheme of things as mapped out by the Vedantic Seers of unimpeachable intellectual eminence.

"When is a man said to be a Yogarudha—to have attained to Yoga."—The answer follows :

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते । ४ ।

4. *yada hi ne ndriyarthesu
na karmasv anusajjate
sarvasamkalpasamnyasi
yogarudhas tado cyate*

यदा - When, हि - verily, न - not, इन्द्रियार्थेषु - in sense-objects, न - not, कर्मसु - in actions, अनुषज्जते -

is attached, सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी - renouncer of all thoughts, योगारूढः - one who has attained to Yoga, तदा - then, उच्यते - is said.

4. When a man is not attached to sense-objects or to actions, having renounced all thoughts, then he is said to have attained to Yoga.

It is the experience of everyone, and therefore, it is not very difficult for a young seeker to know the state of an aspirant (*Aruruksha*). It has been said by the Lord that so long as we are in the state of seeking, the Path of Self-Perfection lies through the high-road of selfless activity. Withdrawal from activity is to be undertaken only when you have reached the state of mental mastery (*Yogarudha*). To renounce activity at an earlier stage, would be as unhealthy as to continue disturbing the mind with activities after having reached the second stage, where we are told, quiescence is the means for gathering speed in our flight through meditation. Naturally, it is necessary for the seeker to know as to when exactly does he reach the second stage indicated here by the term *Yogarudha*.

In this stanza, Krishna is trying to indicate the physical and mental conditions of one who has come to brake the steed of mind and ride over it. He says that when one is feeling no mental attachment either to the sense-objects or to the actions in the outer world, it is one of the symptoms of one's own perfect mastery over the mind. This should not be over-stressed to a dreary literal meaning, making it a grotesque caricature of Truth. It only means that the mind of a seeker in the meditation seat is so perfectly withdrawn from the external world of sense-objects and the activities that it is perfect in its equipoise at the time of its self-application. The sense-organs can run into the channels of the sense-objects only when the mind is flowing out to these organs.

If the mind is kept engaged in the contemplation of a greater Truth, providing for itself there, in the inner bosom, a larger quota of an ample joy, it will no more go hunting for bits of joys in the gutters of sensuality. A well-fed pet dog will not seek the public dust-bins for its feed.

When the mind is not thus gushing out either through the sense-channels or through the fields of its ego-centric activities, it becomes completely engaged in the contemplation of the greater Truth—the Self. Here the term used, to indicate the complete non-attachment, is to be noted very carefully. The Sanskrit word *Anu-Shajjathe* is a word-symbol created by the prefix of an indeclinable *Anu* to the verb *Shaj*, meaning ‘attached’. The prefix *Anu* indicates ‘not a bit’. Therefore, the term used here forbids even traces of attachment either to the sense-objects or to the fields of activity.

When a mind has been withdrawn from the sense-organs and completely detached from all its external physical activities, it is possible that it is still tossed and agitated by the gurglings of its own inner instincts of willing and wishing, desiring and earning. This power of *Sankalpa* can bring more storms into the bosom of man than the disturbances his mind could receive from the external world. Krishna indicates here that he who has gained a complete mastery over his mind is one who has not only withdrawn himself from all sense-contacts and activities in the outer world, but he is one who has also dried up all the *sankalpa*-disturbances¹ in his own mind. Such an individual is, at the moment of meditation, in that inward-state which is described here as *Yogarudha*. It is clear that to such an individual meditation can be intensified only by quietude (*Sama*).

¹ “Oh Desire, I know where your roots lie. You are born of *sankalpa*. I shall not think of you and you will cease to exist along with your roots.”—Mahabharata, *Shanti Parva: 177-25.

“When a man has attained Yoga, then the Self is raised by the Self from out of the numerous evils of finite existence” Therefore,

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः । ५ ।

5. *uddhared atmana tmanam*
na tmanam avasadayet
atmai va hy atmano bandhur
atmai va ripur atmanah

उद्धरेत् - Let (him) lift, आत्मना - by the Self, आत्मानम् - the Self, न - not, नात्मानम् - the Self, अवसादयेत् - let (him) lower, आत्मा - the Self, एव - only, हि - verily, आत्मनः - of the Self, बन्धुः - friend, आत्मा - the Self, एव - only, रिपुः - the enemy, आत्मनः - of the Self.

5. Let a man lift himself by his own Self alone, and let him not lower himself ; for, this Self alone is the friend of oneself, and this Self alone is the enemy of oneself.

As a complete *Sastra*, the *Geeta* has to be faithful to Truth and Truth alone, irrespective of what the tradition of the country had, at a given period, made the faithful ones believe. It is not very unhealthy to believe that the grace from an external source is constantly helping a true seeker on his path of striving—but this is healthy only when this thought is correspondingly complemented with sufficiently intense individual self-effort. To believe that *Guru-grace* will land on us by the post in packets is against the *Sastras*, and the bigger the assertion with which such packets are presented, the more should we suspect the genuineness of the sender-Saint.

Had there been a packet-method, we should have a "Packet-Yoga" explained in our Scriptures; for, our Rishis were exhaustive in their treatment of the Science of Self-Perfection. If at all some Great Saints of today are sending *prasadam*s, it is not to be considered and misconstrued that those packets are "*Atmic-powder*" which can be rubbed in through the skin between the eye brows! With the right mental attitude, if we approach them and make use of them, certainly we can gain a certain amount of mental equipoise and self-confidence which can be intelligently applied in our own self-effort.

"*Man should uplift himself by himself,*" is the open statement declared by no less a person than Lord Krishna Himself—not cooed in a playful mood in the company of the Gopinis of the Jamuna-banks at a hilarious hour of laughter and play, but roared to Arjuna of the battlefield at a serious moment of His life's fulfilment as an *Avatar*. Man, if he wants to exalt himself into his greater cultural and spiritual possibilities, now lying dormant in him, he has to raise the lower in himself to the greater perfection that is the true and eternal central core in himself.

Every one has in himself a picture of the ideal. This intellectual conception of ourselves is always very vivid in each one of us. But unfortunately this ideal remains only in the realm of thought and not in the world of activity. Intellectually we may have a clear and vivid picture of what we should be, but mentally and physically we behave as though we are the opposites of our own ideal concepts. The divorce between the 'idealistic-me' and the 'actual-me' is the measure of man's fall from his perfection.

Eighty per cent of us are generally unconscious of this dualism in ourselves. We mistake ourselves to be the *ideal* and are generally blind to our own *actual* imper-

fections. Thus we find that a notoriously selfish man in society warmly and sincerely criticising the slightest traces of selfishness in his neighbour ! In a world of no-mirrors, it is possible that a squint-eyed man may come to laugh at another squint-eyed person, because the one who laughs knows not the angle in which his own eyeballs are facing each other !!

Within ourselves if we clearly watch, we can discover that intellectually we have a clear concept of a morally strong, ethically perfect, physically loving and socially disciplined ideal picture of the man that 'we should be', but in the mental zones of our emotions and feelings, we are tantalised by our own attachments, likes and dislikes, loves and hatred, appetites and passions, that we behave like a cur fed by the way-side gutters and ever quarrelling with others of the same ilk over dry and empty bones !!

So long as the individual has not realised the existence of this dual personality in himself, there cannot be any religion for him. If an individual has discovered that there is "enough in him to be divided into two portions," and when he wants to keep the lower as brilliant and chaste as the higher, the technique that he will have to employ to fulfil this aspiration is called Religion.

Mind is the saboteur that enchants us away from our own known perfection, to be a slave to the flesh and to the external objects of brittle satisfaction. Mind is the conditioning that distorts the ideal and creates the lower satanic sensuous self in us which is to be brought in unison with the intellect which is the equipment for the higher self to manifest. In short, when the rational and discriminative capacities of a limited intellect are brought to bear their authority upon the wavering and wandering sense-monger-mind, the lower is brought under discipline and made to attune itself with the nobler and the diviner in us. The processes by which the lower is brought under the direct management and discipline of the higher are all together called the spiritual techniques:

This process of self-rehabilitation and self-redemption of the Satan in us cannot be executed through tenders and giving the contract to the lowest bidder. Each will have to do it all by himself unto himself ; “ alone to the Alone all alone ” is the way. No Guru can take the responsibility ; no scripture can promise this redemption ; no altar can with its divine blessings make the lower, the higher. The lower must necessarily be trained slowly and steadily to accept and come under the influence of the discipline of the higher. In this process, the teacher, the scripture, and the Houses-of-God, have all their proper appointed duties and limited influences. But the actual happening depends upon how far we ourselves learn to haul ourselves from the gutters of misunderstanding in ourselves.

So far Bhagavan has indicated an exhaustive treatment which may be in many of its aspects considered equipment to the modern psychological process called introspection. Realising our own weaknesses, rejecting the false, asserting the better and trying to live generally as best as we can the higher way-of-life is the process of introspection. But this is only a half of the entire process and not the full swing.

The other half also is insisted upon, here by Krishna. It is not only sufficient that we look within, come to note our weaknesses, erase them out and substitute the opposite good quality, and develop in ourselves the better, but whatever little conquests we have made out of the Satan's province, we must see to it that those areas are not again handed back to Satan's dominion. Warns Krishna almost in the same breath, “ *Do not allow the self thereafter to fall down and be dragged again* ” to the old level of the cheaper way of existence.

The second line of the stanza contains a glorious idea shaped into a beauty of expression which almost immortalises the great author Vyasa. We are to be considered both as our own friend and our own enemy. Any intelligent man observing and analysing life will vouchsafe

for the truth of the statement, but here more is meant philosophically than what meets the ear. Generally, we do not fully understand the import when we say "*the Self is the friend of the self.*"

The lower in us can ever raise itself to the attunement of the higher, but the Higher can influence only when the lower is available for Its influence. To the extent the lesser in us surrenders itself to the influence of the Higher, to that extent, It can serve the lower as a great friend. But if the lower refuses to come under the influence of the Diviner in us, the Divine Presence in us is accused of as an enemy of ourselves, inasmuch as the dynamism of Life provides us Its energy both for our "life of higher aspirations" and for our "life of low temptations."

Ultimately it is for the aspirant himself to accept the responsibility for blessing or damning himself. The potentiality for improvement, the chances for self-growth, the strength to haul ourselves from our own misconceptions in us—are all ever open for employment. But it all depends upon how we make use of them.

It has been said that "he alone is the friend of himself, he alone is the enemy of himself." Now it may be asked, what sort of a man is the friend of himself and what sort of a man is the enemy of himself?" The answer follows :

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् । ६ ।

6. *bandhur atma tmanas tasya*

yena tmai va tmana jitah

anatmanas tu satrutve

varteta tmai va satruvat

बन्धुः - Friend, **आत्मा** - the Self, **आत्मनः** - of the self, **तस्य** - his, **येन** - by whom, **आत्मा** - the self, **एव** -

even, आत्मना - by the self, जितः - is conquered, अनात्मनः - of unconquered self, तु - but, शत्रुत्वे - in the place of an enemy, वर्तेत - would remain, आत्मा - the self, एव - even, शत्रुवत् - like an enemy.

6. The Self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered himself by the Self, but to the unconquered self, this self stands in the position of an enemy like the (external) foe.

The Diviner in us becomes friend when under its influence the satanic in us gets converted. To the extent the lower ego withdraws itself from its identifications with the body and the sense-organs, feelings and ideas relating to the extrovert life, to that extent that given ego has come under the salutary influence of the nobler and the Diviner. To such an ego, available for correction and proselytisation, the Self is a friend. But where the little-self remains a constant revolt against the higher, to that unconquered-self, the Diviner Self is as if inimical in Its attitude towards the lower.

In short, the higher Self becomes a friend to the lower which is available for and which allows it to be conquered by, the higher influences ; and the Diviner becomes inimical to the undivine when the lower limited ego remains unconquered by the higher aspirations in us. This stanza is an elucidating annotation on the previous.

Earlier,¹ the state of the mental equipoise, called the Yogarudha, was explained. What exactly is the fulfilment of such a State in Yoga is being explained now.

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः । ७ ।

¹ Ibid., 3 and 4.

7. *jitatmanah prasantasya*
paramatma samahitah
sitosnasukhaduhkhesu
tatha manapamanayoh

जितात्मनः - of the self-controlled, प्रशान्तस्य - of peaceful, परमात्मा - the supreme self, समाहितः - balanced, शीतोष्णसुखदःखेषु - in cold and heat, असुर and pain, तथा - as also, मानापमानयोः - in honour and dishonour.

7. The Supreme Self of him who is self-controlled and peaceful, is balanced in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.

When a seeker has come in his inner life to the state attained as Yogarudha, in that State of equipoise when mind is held steadfast in contemplation over the Supreme, the self-controlled one in all serenity is capable of maintaining his consistency of meditation in all circumstances favourable and adverse in all levels of his personality. In the second line of the stanza, it is clearly indicated that no excuse in the world is sufficiently strong to justify a seeker's inability to continue keeping the awareness of his Eternal Nature in himself.

Three pairs-of-opposites are indicated here as— heat and cold ; (ii) joy and sorrow ; (iii) honour and dishonour. In the enumerations of these three teams of conditions, Krishna is exhausting, through the mention of the types, all the possible threats that an individual may get from the outer world against his equipoise and tranquillity.

“Heat and Cold” : are stimuli that are felt and experienced by the body, at the body level. Whether in heat or in cold, thoughts, we know, do not expand or

shrink, and the ideas cannot shiver or perspire. All these reactions can be only in the body and, therefore, Krishna is indicating by this pair all the vicissitudes that may visit the body ; such as health and disease, youth and old-age, etc.

By the second pair-of-opposites indicated here "*pleasure and pain*" the Lord is symbolically indicating all the destinies suffered at the mental zone. Pleasure and pain are experienced not by the body but always by the mind. It includes all the tyrannies of our different emotions which might threaten the mental arena at one time or other in man's life. Hatred and love, affection and jealousy, kindness and cruelty . . . a thousand varieties of emotions may storm the within ; but none of them is an excuse, according to Krishna, for the diligent and the sincere to lose hold of himself from the steadfastness in his contemplation.

Similarly also, the last pair-of-opposites indicated as "*honour and dishonour*" shows how no threat of any storm in the intellectual zone is a sufficient plea to condone or sympathise with an individual who has fallen away from the State of Perfection. Honour and dishonour are evaluated upon and reacted with only by the intellect.

Thus, by these three representative pairs-of-opposites from the three worlds of the body, the mind, and the intellect, Krishna is trying to exhaust all possibilities of obstacles in man's life, and then he adds that in all such conditions the Supreme Self is to be the object of constant realisation for one who is perfectly self-controlled and serene. He ever remains unruffled in all circumstances favourable or unfavourable ; in all environments—good or bad ; in all companies—wise or foolish.

"What is the glory of such an individual ? What does he become by such a process ? Why should he go through such a grovelling inward training and self-discipline ?"

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
युक्तइत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः । ८ ।

8. *jñanavijñanatṛptatma*
kutastho vijitendriyah
yukta ity ucyate yogi
samalostasmakancanah

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा - One who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom (self-realisation), कूटस्थः - unshaken, विजितेन्द्रियः - who has conquered the senses, युक्तः - united or harmonised, इति - thus, उच्यते - is said, योगी - Yogi, समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः - one to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same.

8. The Yogi who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom, who remains unshaken, who has conquered the senses, to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same, is said to be harmonised (i.e., is said to have attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi).

Such an individual, self-controlled and serene, who has come to contemplate constantly upon the Nature of the Self as understood from the *Sastras*, through all his circumstances in life, soon becomes, says Krishna, filled with a divine satisfaction and becomes an unshakeable *Yogin*. Here, the satisfaction is not merely the joy that a true and intelligent man comes to enjoy when he carefully studies and masters Vedanta, but, according to Krishna, a true *Yogin* comes to experience a satisfied contentment which is much superior to the thrilled joys experienced in all intense studies.

The knowledge gained through study is indicated here by the term *Gyana*, and the first-hand experience gained

by the seeker of the Self in himself is called the Knowledge of direct perception, which is termed here, in the Geeta-vocabulary, as *Vigyana*.¹

Kootastha : (Unchanging, Immutable)—This is the term used for the Eternal Self. Its expressiveness becomes apparent when we understand that the term "*Koota*" means in Sanskrit the "anvil". The anvil is that upon which the blacksmith places his red-hot iron-bits and hammers them into the required shapes. In spite of the hammerings, nothing happens to the anvil as the anvil resists all modification and change, but allows all other things to get changed while in contact with it. Thus, the term "*Kootastha*" means that which "remains anvil-like" and though itself suffers no change, it makes others change.

He is a saint and has the full-blown fragrance of perfection, who has sought and discovered a perfect contentment which arises out of his subjective experience of what the *Sastra* says and has come in contact with the Self that changes not. And such a saint becomes tranquil and a master of equal-vision in all conditions of his life. To him, a clod of mud, a precious stone and costly gold are all the same. This equanimity of mind in profit and loss, at the acquisition of precious things or at the presentation of mere filth, is the very test to show that the individual has spiritually evolved and that to him no gain can bring any extra joy, nor any loss any extra sorrow !!

In my dream I earned a lot of wealth, but ere I enjoyed it fully, I woke up to my waking-state, poverty. In my destitution, when I am suffering the pangs of

¹ It is Sankara's interpretation and the Acharya distinguishes *Gyana* from *Vigyana*, inasmuch as, according to this father of modern Vedanta, *Gyana* is "book knowledge" and *Vigyana* is "wisdom gained through direct realization" of the things so taught.

hunger, I will not feel in any sense of the term consoled in the thought that I was rich in my dream and that in my dream-bank I had my dream-riches in its dream-vaults! Similarly, a master after gaining perfection when he has transcended the world of the mind and intellect, and has achieved the true awakening of the soul, to him, thereafter, a lump of earth, a piece of gold or a precious stone of this world are all equally futile things. They cannot add even a jot of extra joy or pain unto him. He has become the sole proprietor of the Bliss Absolute. To Kubera, the treasure of the heavens, even a kingdom on the globe, is no profit which can make him dance in ecstasy !

“ Moreover, . . . ”

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यवन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते । ९ ।

9. *suhrnmitrariyudasina—*

madhyasthadvesyabandhusu

sadhusv api ca papesu

samabuddhir visisyate

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यवन्धुषु - In the good-hearted, in friends, in enemies, in the indifferent, in neutrals, in haters, and in relatives, साधुषु - in the righteous, अपि - also, च - and, पापेषु - in the unrighteous, समबुद्धिः - one who has equal mind, विशिष्यते - excels.

9. He who is of the same mind to the good-hearted friends, enemies, the indifferent, the neutral, the hateful, relatives, the righteous and the unrighteous excels.

In the previous stanza it was indicated that the man of perfection develops equal-vision as far as the things of the world are concerned. The universe is not made of things alone ; but is constituted of beings also. Now the doubt arises, what will be the relationship between a perfect man of equipoise with the living kingdom of beings around him ? Will he negate the whole lot as unreal ? In his preoccupations with the experience of the Eternal and the Immortal, which is the substratum for the entire world of changing phenomenal beings, will he ignore to serve the world and help the living generation ? This idea is taken up here for discussion in this stanza.

Such a man of excellence, Krishna says, regards all relationship with an equal love and consideration, be they "*friends, or foes, or the indifferent, or the neutral, or the hateful, or the nearest relations.*" In his equal-vision all of them are equally important and he embraces, with his infinite heart, all of them in the same warmth and ardour.

His love knows no distinction between the righteous and unrighteous, the good and the bad. To him a sinner is but an ego living in its misunderstandings, since sin is only a mistake of the soul and not a positive blasphemy against Itself. Rama Tirtha beautifully expresses it when he says that, "we are punished by the sin and not for it."

In the right understanding of his own Self and the resulting realisation of his own Self, he becomes the Self everywhere, and he discovers a unity in the perceived diversity and a subtle rhythm in the obvious discord in the world outside. Having realised himself to be the Self which is all-pervading, to him the entire universe becomes his own Self, and, therefore, his relationship with every other part of the universe is equal and same. Whether I get wounded in the hand or the leg, on the back or in the front, on the head or the shoulder, it is the same to me, since I am equally identifying myself with my head, my trunk, and my legs, as myself.

“Through what methods can one attain this highest goal and assure for oneself the surest result?” It is explained :

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः । १० ।

10. *yogi yunjita satatam*
atmanam rahasi sthitah
ekaki yatacittatma
nirasir aparigraha

योगी - The Yogi, युञ्जीत - let him keep the mind, steady, सततम् - constantly, आत्मानम् - self, रहसि - in solitude, स्थितः - remaining, एकाकी - alone, यतचित्तात्मा - one with the mind and body controlled, निराशीः - free from hope, अपरिग्रहः - free from greed.

10. Let the Yogi try constantly to keep the mind steady, remaining in solitude, alone with the mind and body controlled, free from hope and greed.

The last few stanzas expound and explain such a wondrous Goal of Life that no reader of the Geeta with intelligence and enthusiasm can stand away from the compelling charm of its beauteous face. Arjuna seems to have expressed an eagerness to know the ways and means by which this indomitable inward equilibrium can be achieved by him for his own constant experience. As an answer to his eager looks, Krishna explains in his own words how an individual can slowly grow to maintain himself finally in this spirit of consummate love for all, at all times.

Krishna is conceived in the Mahabharata as a voluntary manifestation of the Supreme and hence he is addressed as *Shri Krishna Paramatman*. He is giving here an advice to his most intimate friend and life's companion, Arjuna, on the methods of self-development and the techniques of self-perfection. Even then it was not said that the Lord would give him a secret method by which the seeker would not have to make any struggle at all, that the entire responsibility would be borne by the Creator of the Universe. The very opening words of the stanza weeds out any such false hopes in the minds of the seekers. "*O man of self-control (Yogi), you should constantly practise concentration.*" It is only through the practice of meditation that a mortal can grow out of his weaknesses and flower forth culturally into the greater perfection—possibilities within himself.

Details of how the meditation is to be conducted are given in the rest of the stanza. "*Sitting in solitude*" one should practise meditation. This word has been unnecessarily over-stretched in recent times in India that the term "meditation" bring a sense of horror and fear into the minds of the early seekers. It does not mean that meditation can be practised only in the jungles and in solitary caves. It only means that in our homes the seeker should try to withdraw himself from his mental and physical preoccupations and should retire to a corner in his house for the purpose of his early meditation.

Solitude can be gained only when there is a mental withdrawal from the world outside. One who is full of desires and constantly meditating upon the sense-objects cannot hope to gain any solitude even in a virgin forest. Again, the word solitude (*Rahasi*) rings a meaning of secretiveness, indicating that religion should not be a broadcast of self-advertisement, but must be a set of true values of life secretly practised within the heart ordering our way of thinking and encouraging our pursuit of the nobler values of life. Physically alone (*Ekaki*) for the

purposes of meditation when one strives, his success in his inward quietude will be directly proportional to the amount of self-control he is practising in his daily life. Self-control is not possible unless we know how to free ourselves from “eagerness to possess” and “anxiety to hoard.” To renounce our preoccupations with our endless plans for possessing more is indicated here by the term “free from hope” (*Nirasihi*). And the term “free from possession” (*Aparigraha*) indicate all our anxieties in saving, hoarding and protecting what we possess.

When one well-established in these necessary physical self-controls, unavoidable mental and intellectual habits, sits meditating upon the Truth in all secrecy, he is a true seeker striving on the right path to achieve and acquire the highest that is possible in life.

“Now, in the sequel, the Lord proceeds to prescribe for the Yoga-practitioner particular modes of sitting, eating, recreation and the like aids to Yoga.” First of all, he explains the mode of sitting as follows:

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥

11. *sucāu dese pratisthāpya*
sthīram asanam atmanah
na tyucchritam no tinicam
caḥlajīnakusottaram

शुशौ - In a clean, देशे - spot, प्रतिष्ठाप्य - having established, स्थिरम् - firm, आसनम् - seat, आत्मनः - his own, न - not, अत्युच्छ्रितम् - very high, न - not, अतिनीचम् - very low, चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् - a cloth, skin and Kusa-grass one over the other.

11. Having in a clean spot established a firm seat of his own, neither too high nor too low, made of a cloth, a skin and Kusa-grass, one over the other.

If meditation is the path by which one can gain tranquillity and equal-vision within oneself it is necessary that, in this text-book of self-perfection, Lord Krishna should give a complete and exhaustive explanation of the technique of meditation. In order to fulfil this demand hereunder we get a few verses explaining the position, the means and the end of a meditator at his work.

In these words is a description of the seat and the place for perfect meditation. "*In a clean place*": It is important inasmuch as the external conditions have a direct bearing upon the human mind. In a clean place there is more chance for the seekers to maintain a cleaner mental condition. Apart from this, commentators explain that the place should be rid of mosquitoes, house-flies, bugs, ants and such other creatures that may disturb the beginner's mental concentration which he is trying to turn inward. Also, cleanliness is considered as next to Divinity in India—not, of course, in our modern times of total Hindu decadence, where a typical '*Bhakta*' is a stinking specimen of dirt and ugliness!

In his seat, the meditator is asked to sit steady (*sthiram*). Without moving the physical body at every short interval and without swinging the body either forward and backward or sideways, the seeker is asked to get himself firmly established on his seat, because, physical movement contributes immensely to the shattering of the mental concentration and inner equipoise. This is very well realised by every one of us if we only remember our attitude when we are sincerely and seriously thinking over something. In order to get established in a firm posture it would be advisable to sit in any "comfortable seat (*Asana*), with the vertebral column erect, fingers interlocked and hands thrown in front."¹

Adding more details, Krishna says, that the seat of meditation "should not be too high or too low." If it is too high there will be a sense of insecurity in the meditator, created as a result of his instinct of self-preservation, and he will find it difficult to extricate himself from his outer-world-consciousness and plunge himself into the inner. Again, we are told that the seat should not be too low ; this is to avoid the mistakes of meditating in any damp underground cellar, where chances are that the seeker may easily develop rheumatic pains in his body. During meditation the heart becomes slightly slow, and, to the extent we are withdrawn into ourselves, even the blood pressure falls down. At such a time of low resistance, if the place be damp, there is a great chance of a seeker developing pains in his joints. To avoid such a calamity, this warning is given here.

When the Geeta is out to give details, she leaves nothing to the imagination of the student. The exhaustive details regarding the ideal seat to sit for meditation

¹ Refer Swamiji's "Meditation and Life".

is an example. It is said here that a mattress of *Kusa-grass* on the ground, with a deer-skin covered with a piece of cloth on top of it, is the perfect seat for long meditations. Dampness is avoided by the *Kusa-grass* which keeps the seat warm during winter. In summer the skin becomes too hot and some seekers are allergic to the animal skin, especially when their skin has become slightly moist with perspiration. This contingency is being avoided by spreading over the skin a piece of clean cloth. Having thus established himself firmly on the meditation-seat, prepared as above, what exactly he is to do mentally and intellectually is now to be explained.

“What should be done after establishing oneself upon the prepared seat?”

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।

उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥

12. *tatrai kagram manah krtva*
yatacittendriyakriyah
upavisya sane yunjyad
yogam atmavisuddhaye

तत्र - There, एकाग्रम् - one-pointed, मनः - the mind, कृत्वा - having made, यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः - one who has controlled the actions of the mind and the senses, उपविश्य - being seated, आसने - on the seat, युञ्ज्यात् - let him practise, योगम् - Yoga, आत्मविशुद्धये - for the purification of the self.

12. There, having made the mind one-pointed, with the actions of the mind and the senses controlled, let him, seated on the seat, practise Yoga for the purification of the self.

However, scientifically prepared it may be, to sit in an appropriate Asana (seat) is not in itself Yoga. The appropriate physical condition is conducive in generating the right mental attitude for the spiritual practices but a mere physical altitude cannot in itself guarantee any spiritual self-development.

In this verse, Krishna is giving what the seeker should practise in his seat of meditation. Having brought the body steadfast in posture and steady, how one should employ his mind and intellect in the process of divine contemplation and meditation is the theme which is being discussed here. The first instruction given is that "*You should make the mind single-pointed.*" This instruction cannot be worked out by a seeker unless he knows how he can bring about this necessary inward condition in himself. It is very cheap and easy for a *Rishi* to advise the members of the confused generation to make their mind integrated.

Such an advice, when not sufficiently supported by practical details, becomes a mere high-sounding philosophy and not a useful guidance for the seekers. The Gesta being a text-book, which translates philosophy into life, in its typical spirit here the stanza immediately explains how we can bring the mind to an ideal single-pointedness.

"*Subduing the faculty of imagination and the activities of the sense-organs*"—is the instruction given by Krishna. Single-pointedness is the very potent nature

of the mind but it gets flabbergasted, confused and even mad when it gets dynamised by either the inner force of one's own surging imagination or the outward pull rendered by the hallucinations of the sense-organs. If these two avenues of dissipation are blocked, instantaneously the mind becomes of its own nature single-pointed.

Thus, seated on the earlier prepared meditation-seat, and making the mind single-pointed through the process of subduing mental imaginations and controlling the wildness of the sense-organs, the seeker is encouraged to practise *Yoga*. To keep the single-pointed mind constantly at the steady contemplation of the Ultimate Self is the inner *Yoga* that has been mentioned here.

Naturally, every seeker would have rightly a desire to know why he should meditate thus. In order to remove all misunderstandings from the heart of meditators that they would be thereby directly coming face to face with the Atman, Krishna here appends to the verse that effects of such meditation. Through steady and regular meditation, the *Sastra* promises only inner purification. Agitations in the mind are its impurities. A purified mind is that which has no agitations and when the mind has thus become pure and steady, the Consciousness looking at the steady reflection of Itself comes to rediscover Its own Real Nature. This process is similar to the technique by which we understand ourselves while consulting our own reflection made in a mirror.

"The external seat has been described. Now, what should be the posture of the body? Listen..."

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥

13. *samam kayasirogrivam*
dharayann acalam sthirah
sampreksya nasikagram svam
disas ca navalokayan

समम् - Erect, कायशिरोघ्रीवम् - body, head and neck, धारयन् - holding, अचलम् - still, स्थिरः - steady, संप्रेक्ष्य - gazing at, नासिकाग्रम् - tip of the nose, स्वम् - one's own, दिशः - directions, च - and, अनवलोकयन् - not looking.

13. Let him firmly hold his body, head and neck erect and still, gazing at the tip of his nose, without looking round.

After describing in all detail the arrangement of the seat of meditation and how to sit there properly, Lord Krishna had already explained what the meditator should do with his mind and intellect. He said earlier that the mind should be made single-pointed by subduing all the activities of the sense-organs and the imagination. Adding more detail to the technique of meditation it is now said that the meditator should firmly hold his body in such a fashion that his vertebral column is completely erect. The head and the neck should be erect and in this posture, which is geometrically perpendicular to the horizontal seat upon which the Yogi is firmly settling himself, it is pointedly indicated that he should hold his body "firmly".

This term should not be misunderstood as holding the body in all tension. "Firmly" here means not that the body should be held stiffly but that the relaxed body

must be held in such a fashion that there should not be in the physical structure any tendency to swing forwards and backwards or sideways from right to left.

The seeker having thus fixed himself ready for the meditation, it is added here that he should "*gaze at the tip of his nose.*" This does not mean that an individual should with half-opened eyes deliberately turn his eyeballs towards the "tip of his own nose." There are many seekers who had come to suffer much physical discomforts, such as headaches, giddiness, exhaustion, tensions, etc., because they have tried to follow this instruction too verbatim. Sankara in his commentary has definitely given us the right direction. He says that the term here means only that the meditator while meditating should have his attention "*as though turned towards the tip of his own nose.*" That this interpretation is not a laboured and artificial intellectualism of the Acharya is clearly borne out by the following phrase in the second line.

"*Not looking around*"—this instruction clearly shows what was in the mind of Krishna when he gave the instruction that the meditator should take his post on his sacred seat and direct his entire attention towards the tip of his own nose—so that he may not get himself dissipated in his attention and wander all round. Where the eyes go there the mind faithfully follows, this is the law. That is why when an individual is rather confused, we find that his gaze is not steady. Many a time we judge another individual as behaving funny or suspicious, and in all such cases our evidence is nothing other than the unsteadiness in the gaze of the individual concerned. Watch any one who is indecisive and who is unsteady in his determination and you can immediately observe that the individual's looks are definitely unsteady and confusedly wandering.

"*Moreover...*"

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।
मनःसंयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत् मत्परः ॥

१४

14. *prasantatma vigatabhir
brahmacarivrate sthitah
manah samyamya maccitto
yukta asita matparah*

प्रशान्तात्मा - Serene-minded, विगतभीः - fearless, ब्रह्मचारिव्रते - in the vow of Brahmacharya, स्थितः - firm, मनः - the mind, संयम्य - having controlled, मच्चित्तः - thinking on Me, युक्त - balanced, आसीत् - let him sit, मत्परः - as the Supreme Goal.

14. Serene-minded, fearless, firm in the vow of Brahmacharya, having controlled the mind, thinking on Me and balanced, let him sit, having Me as the Supreme Goal.

When the meditator has thus practised meditation for a certain period of time, as a result of his practice, in his mind he comes to experience a larger share of quietude and peace. This extremely subtle form of inward peace is indicated here by the term "*Prasanta*". This inward silence revelling in an atmosphere of extreme joy and contentment—is the exact situation in which the individual can be trained to express the nobler and the diviner qualities which are inherent in the Divine Self.

A meditator invariably finds it difficult to scale into the higher realms of experience due to a sheer psychological fear-complex. As the *Yogin* slowly and steadily gets himself unwound from his sensuous *vasanas*, he gets

himself released, as it were, from the cruel embrace of his own mental octopus. At this moment of transcendence the unprepared seeker feels himself mortally afraid of the thought that he is getting himself dissolved away into 'nothingness'. The ego, in its long habits of living in close proximity with its own limitations, finds it hard even to believe that there is an existence Supreme, Divine and Infinite. One is reminded of the story of the stranded fisher-women who complained that they could not get any sleep at all that day when they had to spend the night in a perfumery-shop, till they put their baskets very near their nose! Away from our pains we dread to enter the Infinite Bliss!

This sense of fear is the death-knell of all spiritual progress. Even if progress were to reach the bosom of such an individual, he will be compelled to reject it because of the rising storm of subjective fear in himself.

The mind that has become extremely peaceful and joyous, even though it has renounced all its sense of fear through the study of the Scriptures and continuous practice of regular meditation, the progress is not assured, and even a guarantee of failure shall ever be hanging over the head of the seeker, unless he struggles hard to get himself established in perfect *Brahmacharya*.

"The asceticism of *Brahmacharya*"—Here the word implies not only its Upanishadic implications, but definitely something more original especially when it comes from Lord Krishna's mouth, and that too in the context of the Geeta. *Brahmacharya* generally translated as 'the vow of celibacy' has a particular meaning but the term has also a wider and a more general implication. *Brahmacharya* is not only the control of the sex-impulses but is the practice of self-control in all avenues of sense-impulses and sense-satisfactions. Unless the seeker has built up in a perfect cage of intelligent self-control—the

entire world-of-objects shall flood into the bosom, to bring therein a supreme state of unending chaos. A mind agitated thus by the inflow of the sense-objects is a mind that is completely dissipated and ruined.

Apart from this meaning, which is essentially indicative of the goal or rather, indicative of a state of complete detachment from the mind's courtings with the external world-of-objects, there is a deeper implication to this significant and famous term. *Brahmacharya* as such is a term that can be dissolved to mean "wanderings in *Brahma-Vihar*". To engage our mind in the contemplation of the Self, the Supreme Reality, is the saving factor that can really help us in withdrawing our mind from the external objects.

The human mind must have one field or other to engage itself. Unless it be given some inner field to meditate upon, it will not be in a position to retire itself from its extrovert pre-occupations. This is the secret behind all success in "total celibacy". The successful Indian *Yogin* need not be gazed at as a rare phenomenon in nature and his success can be the success of everybody if only they know how to get themselves established in this inward self-control. It is because people are ignorant of the positive methods to be practised for a continuous and successful negation and complete rejection of the charms of the sense-organs, that they invariably fail in their endeavour.

Here, the secret method of living *Brahmacharya* is indicated by the very same term as an instruction. In fact, *Brahmacharya* is a 'bi-sexual term', capable of self-fertilisation! In the very same term we have a happy marriage of both instruction and prescription. Generally in the Scriptural texts we have portions wherein the teachers give instructions of what ought to be done, which is invariably followed by complete and detailed

prescription of how the "instruction portion" (*Vidhi*) can be faithfully availed of and followed. But in the case of the term *Brahmacharya* we have in it at once the instruction on what ought to be done and also the prescription on how best it can be done.

Naturally, it becomes easy for the individual who has gained in himself all the three above-mentioned qualities to control and direct the newfound energies in himself. The inward peace, an attribute of the intellect, comes only when the discriminative faculty is relatively quiet. Fearlessness brings about a large control over the exhaustive thought commotions in the mental zone. *Brahmacharya* in its aspect of sense-withdrawal lends a larger share of physical quietude. Therefore, when by the above process, the intellect, mind, and body are all controlled and brought to the maximum amount of peace and quietude, the 'way of life' pursued by the seeker provides for him a large saving in the mental energy which would have been otherwise spent away in sheer dissipation.

This newly discovered and fully availed strength makes the mind stronger and stronger, so that the seeker experiences in himself a growing capacity to withdraw his wandering mind unto himself and to fix his entire thoughts "in the contemplation of Me, the Self."

The concluding instruction in this most significant verse in the Chapter, we read the Lord's words, "*Let him sit in Yoga having Me as his Supreme Goal.*" It had been already said in the earlier chapter that the meditator should continue meditation, and ere long (*Achirat*) he will have the fulfilment of his meditation. The same idea is suggested here. Having made the mind tame and keeping it away from its own endless dissipations, we are instructed to keep the single-pointer mind in the completion of the Divine and His Eternal Nature in the Self. Immediately

following this instruction is the order that he should remain in this attitude of meditation seeking nothing else but “*Me, as the Supreme Goal*”. Ere long, in the silence and quietude of the within, the withering mind and other equipments shall exhaust themselves, and the seeker shall wake up to realise his own Infinite Eternal, Blissful and quiet Nature, the Self.

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥

15. *yunjann evam sada tmanam*
yogi niyatamanasah
santim nirvanaparamam
matsamstham adhigacchati

युञ्जन् - Balancing, एवम् - thus, सदा - always, आत्मानम् - the self, योगी - Yogi, नियतमानसः - one with the controlled mind, शान्तिम् - to peace, निर्वाणपरमाम् - that which culminates in *Nirvana* (*Moksha*), मत्संस्थाम् - abiding in me, अधिगच्छति - attains.

15. Thus, always keeping the mind balanced, Yogi, with his mind controlled, attains to the Peace abiding in Me, which culminates in total liberation (*Nirvana* or *Moksha*).

After describing thus the physical pose, the mental stability and the consequent intellectual self-application, the Lord, on the Kurukshetra is describing the last lap in the technique of meditation to His beloved friend, the

Pandava Prince. When all the above details are worked out in any oneself, that individual becomes a man steadfast both in his physical and in his subtler life, and, thereby, he comes to release from himself a large quantity of his psychic vitality. In this stanza it is told that when a meditator controls his mind and 'constantly' (*sada*) keeps his mind away from its agitations, it is such an individual that could easily and surely reach the Supreme.

The term 'always' (*sada*) should not be misunderstood as suggesting that the practitioner should thereby come to live criminally neglecting all his duties towards his home and his world around himself. Here the term 'always' only connotes "a duration of constant and consistent inner silence", during one's meditation. At the peak of meditation, the practitioner comes to a point of perfect and still 'halt'². The following stanza explains what happens in the still moment when the mind is perfectly calmed.

The individual comes to experience an infinite peace which is "*the peace that resides in him*". Self is Peace Absolute (*Shantam*) inasmuch as the processes of mental agitations, intellectual disturbances, physical excitements are not there, in the Self, since it is beyond these matter envelopments. In this portion of the stanza it may look as though Krishna is advocating the dualistic school of philosophy, since, here, it is said, "the meditator *reaches* the peace that is My own nature." To conceive of a Truth having qualities, is to reduce the Eternal to the finite status of a substance (*Dravya*). Again, if the meditator experiences "*the peace that resides in Me*", then the goal gained becomes an 'object' different from the meditator.

The subtle Philosopher, Sri Krishna, recognised this unavoidable imperfection of the spoken language and,

² Read Swamiji's "Meditation and Life".

therefore, he tries to neutralize the fallacy in his expressions by the significant terms “the peace that ultimately culminates in the Supreme liberation” (*Nirvana-paramam*).

In short, when the meditator has come to the moment of perfect silence within, he comes to experience, at first, a peace that is unknown in the world without, and soon, as it were, the experiencer gets slowly acted upon and digested into the very substance of the Truth, whose fragrance was the Peace which the dying ego of the meditator, in its gasping delusion, seemed to experience at the gateway to its own Real Divine Nature. In short, in the last stage of fulfilment in meditation, the meditator ‘awakens’ to his own status of Self-hood. This *Advaita* experience is the one sole factor that had been repeated at all hands all over in Krishna’s Song Divine.

“Following are the regulations, as regards the Meditators’ food etc.”

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।
न चाति स्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥

16. *na tyasnatas tu yogo sti*
na cai kantam anasnatat
na ca tisvapnasilasya
jagrato na va ca rjuna

न - not, अत्यश्नतः - of one who eats too much, तु- verily, योगः - Yoga, अस्ति - is, न - not, च - and, एकान्तम् - at all, अनश्नतः - of one who does not eat, न - not, च - and, अतिस्वप्नशीलस्य - of one who sleeps too much, जाग्रतः - one who is awake, न - not, एव - even, च - and, अर्जुन - O Arjuna.

16. Verily, Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much, nor for him who does not eat at all; nor for him who sleeps too much, nor for him who is (always) awake O! Arjuna.

When the above technique and goal is so clearly given out, one is apt to wonder at one's own incapacity to reach anywhere near the indicated goal in spite of the fact that one has been sincerely and constantly meditating for a number of years. What is exactly the behaviour in a seeker that unconsciously takes him away from the grand road to success? No scientific theory is complete unless it enumerates the various precautions that are to be taken for achieving complete success. The stanza under review and the following ones, together give a warning of all the possible pitfalls on the path of the *Dhyana Yoga*.

Moderate in indulgences and activities at all levels of one's personality is an unavoidable pre-requisite which alone can assure true success in meditation. Intemperateness would bring discordant and riotous agitations in the various layers of matter, shattering the harmonious melody in the life of integration. Therefore, strict moderation in food, sleep and recreation is enjoined; everything should be well measured and completely defined.

“*Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much nor for him who does not eat at all*”—here, the term ‘eat’ should be understood as including in its all comprehensive meaning all sense-enjoyments, mental feelings, and intellectual perceptions. It is not only the process of consuming things through the mouth; it includes the enjoyments gained through all the avenues of sense-perceptions and inward experiences.

There is a lot of confusion regarding the advisability or otherwise of certain types of food. Seekers generally

get too much confused with the problem of what to eat and what not to eat. Perhaps to remove this idea, Sankara in his commentary quotes a relevant advice given in *Satha-Patha Brahmana* : "Whatever food is suited to oneself that protects ; it injures not. A greater quantity injures and a smaller quantity protects not". In fact, if the above quotation explains what to eat, *Patanjali Yoga-sastra* clearly gives a right direction to all meditators on how much to eat.³

Drawing our conclusions from these standards, we may understand the rule to be : "eat whatever comes to us handy, without creating unnecessary destruction to the living kingdom, just for our personal existence, and consume an intelligent quantity which does not load our stomach." This is the golden rule of dieting for a successful meditator.

It is rightly said that neither 'too much of sleep',—which unnecessarily dullens our faculties and renders the individual more and more gross—nor 'no sleep at all' is the right policy for a student in the spiritual life. Intelligent moderation is the law.

This stanza might confuse the dull-witted and, therefore, the following verse answers the questions : "*How then can Yoga be achieved ?*"

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

17. *yuktaharaviharasya*
 yuktacestasya karmasu
 yuktasvapnavabodhasya
 yogo bhavati duhkha

³ Patanjali insists "half (the stomach) for food and condiments, the third (quarter) for water and the fourth should be reserved for the free movement of air."

युक्ताहारविहारस्य - Of one who is moderate in eating and recreation, युक्तचेष्टस्यकर्मसु - of one who is moderate in exertion in actions, युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य - of one who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness, योगः - Yoga, भवति - becomes, दुःखहा - the destroyer of pain.

17. Yoga becomes the destroyer of pain for him who is moderate in eating and recreation, who is moderate in his exertion during his actions, who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness.

This stanza plans the favourable life, living which *Yoga* can be more successfully cultivated. Moderation in eating and recreation, in sleep and activities, is the prescription that has been insisted upon by the Lord of Yoga.

In indicating the blessed life of temperance and self-control, Krishna has used such select vocabulary that the words have the fragrant note of an ampler suggestiveness. An ordinary seeker takes to some sacred work in a misguided belief that "selfless work" could create in him more worthiness for his spiritual life. In this false notion, many seekers have I met, who have in the long run fallen a prey to their own activities. In this stanza we have a clear direction as to how to avoid the victimization of ourselves by the work that we undertake.

Not only is it sufficient, implies Krishna, that we must be temperate—discriminately careful in choosing the right field of activity—but also we must see that the *efforts* that we put into that activity are also moderate (*Cheshtasya*). Having selected a divine work, if in its programme of effort we get ourselves bound and enslaved, the chances are that the work instead of redeeming us from our existing

vasanas, would create in us not only more and more new tendencies, but in the exhaustion created by the work we would sink slowly into agitations and, perhaps, even into animalism.

When Krishna wants to indicate the absolute necessity for moderation regarding sleep and wakefulness the phrases which he uses are very significant. ‘*Swapna*’ is the term used for indicating the total conscious life of the Ego’s active experiences in the world. Elsewhere in the Upanishads⁴ also the entire life’s experiences have been classified under the ‘state of sleep’ (the non-apprehension of Reality) and the ‘state of dream’ (the mis-apprehension of Reality) wherein the waking state is also found to be included. Reading the same meaning of the *Karika* into the term *Swapna* used here by the Divine Charioteer, we can easily find that the wakefulness (*Avabodha*) mentioned here is a happy complementary term to *Swapna*. The terms altogether mean more than what meets the ear.

The term *Avabodha* used here echoes the scriptural goal explained therein as Absolute Knowledge. In short, to all intelligent and deep students of the Upanishads the term as used here carries an unsaid secret message: that the meditator should not over indulge either in the life of mis-apprehensions nor in those deep silent moments of pure meditation—the moments of *Avabodha*. Krishna indicates that *Sadhaks* during their early practices should not over indulge either in the world of their perceptions nor try to practise too long and weary hours of meditation and force their inner silence.

In the same stanza by two insignificant-looking words Krishna has conveyed to all generations of Geeta students an indication why *Yoga* is to be at all practised. “It is capable of destroying all miseries.”

⁴ Read Swamiji’s “Discourses on Mandokya and Karika”.

“ When does one become a saint perfectly steadfast (Yukta) ? ”.

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्तइत्युच्यते तदा ॥

18. *yada vniyatam cittam
atmany eva vatisthate
nihsprhah sarvakamebhyo
yukta ity ucyate tada*

यदा - When, विनियतम् - perfectly controlled, चित्तम् - mind, आत्मनि - in the Self, एव - only, अवतिष्ठते - rests, निःस्पृहः - free from longing, सर्वकामेभ्यः - from all (objects of) desires, युक्तः - united, इति - thus, उच्यते - is said, तदा - then.

18. When the perfectly controlled mind rests in the Self only, free from longing for all (objects of) desires, then it is said “ he is united ” (*yuktah*).

This and the following five stanzas are a desertation on the fruits of Yoga and they explain what a perfect meditator can gain in life, and what his experiences are while living in this world during and after his spiritual realisation. This Section not merely provides the students with theoretical elucidations on the condition of Self-integration and the status of Self-Realisation, but it very efficiently sharpens the enthusiasm in all true seekers, who are ambitious actually come to live the Truth explained therein. Very subtle truths, which are the intimate experiences of all true meditators, are so beautifully hinted at in the exquisite suggestiveness of the language used in these verses.

Throughout in the Geeta so far, Krishna has been stressing the necessity of one quality, steadfastness (*Yuktah*). A complete and exhaustive definition has not been so far given to explain this crucial term, although sufficient hints had been thrown here and there to indicate the nature of man who is steadfast in devotion and *Yoga* ; here we have almost a complete definition of it.

When the mind is completely under control, the stanza claims, that it "*rests serenely in the Self alone*". A little reflection can bring the truth of the statement to our easy comprehension. Uncontrolled mind is one, which frantically gallops on, seeking for a satisfaction among the sense-objects. We have been already told that the mind can be withdrawn from its preoccupations with its usual sense-objects, only when it is firmly tied down to the contemplation of the Self which is the Eternal Substratum, the Conscious Principle that illumines all perceptions and experiences. Naturally, therefore, a mind that is fully controlled is that which has lost itself, as it were, in the steady and continuous contemplation of the Self.

The above explanation is endorsed by the second line of the same stanza which gives us an inkling into the means by which we can fix our mind on the Supreme. "*Free from longing after all desires*"—is the means that has been suggested repeatedly throughout the Lord's Song. It is unfortunate that the hasty commentators unconsciously come to over-emphasize the "renunciation of all desires" as the cardinal virtue in Hinduism. There is an ocean of difference between the '*desires*' and the '*longing after desires*'. Desires in themselves are not unhealthy, nor can they actually bring about any sorrow unto us. But the disproportionate amount of our clinging to our desires is the cancer of our mind that brings about all the mortal agonies into our life.

For example, desire for wealth is healthy inasmuch as it encourages the mind to act and to accomplish, to acquire and to keep, to earn and to save. But when this desire possesses an individual in such a way that he becomes almost hysterical with his own over-anxiety at his very desire, it makes him incompetent to put forth any substantial creative effort, and thus accomplish glories worthwhile for the dignity of man.

A desire in itself cannot and does not bring about storms in the mind, as can our longing after those very same desires. The 'Geeta' advises us only to renounce our *yearnings* for all objects of desires.

Through discrimination and proper intellectual evaluation of the sense-objects, when an individual has withdrawn his mind from its usual sense-gutters, the mind comes to take hold of the subtler and the diviner theme of the Self for its contemplation. The limited and finite sense-objects agitate the mind, while the Unlimited and the Infinite Self brings peace and joy into the within. This condition of sense-withdrawal and the entry into the Self of the mind is called its condition of steadfastness (*Yuktah*).

“ Such a Yogin's steadfast-mind is described below ” :

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥

19. *yatha dipo nivatastho*

nengate so pama smrta

yogino yatacittasya

yunjato yogam atmanah

यथा - As, दीपः - lamp, निवातस्थः - placed in a windless place, न - not, इङ्गते - flicker, सा - that, उपमा - simile, स्मृता - is thought, योगिनः - of the

Yogi, यतचित्तस्य - of one with controlled mind,
 युञ्जतः - of the practising, योगम् - the Yoga, आत्मनः -
 of the Self.

19. "As a lamp placed in a windless place does not flicker"—is a simile used to describe the *Yogi* of controlled mind, practising *Yoga* in the Self (or absorbed in the *Yoga-of-the-Self*).

As an efficient complementary to the previous verse this stanza explains the mind of the *Yogi* of collected thoughts who is absorbed in *Yoga*. This explanation is given through the help of a famous simile : "as a lamp in a spot sheltered from the wind does not flicker." The example is quite appropriate inasmuch as the mind is as fickle and unsteady as the tip of the flame. Thoughts appear in the mind at every second in a continuous stream, and these constant thought disturbances, each dying yielding place to a new one, gives us the apprehension of a solid factor called, the mind. Similarly, the tip of a flame also, (it can be experimentally proved) is never steady, but the continuity of its change is so fast that it gives us an apparent illusion of solidarity.

When this flame is well protected from the fickle breeze, then it becomes steady in its upward flights. In the same fashion the flame of the mind, flickering at the whims and fancies for the passing sensuous desires, when arrested in a meditator, becomes steadily brilliant, although the mind is made to contemplate upon the Self by a constant flow of *Brahmakara Vritti*. In short, repeated and constant thought of *Brahman*—Vast and Infinite, Eternal and Blissful, the Substratum for the entire Universe—is the "concentration in the Self" (*Yogamathamnah*).

"Having thus, through meditation, become single-pointed, what would be the stages of progress accomplished is described here in the following four stanzas" :

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति । २० ।

20. *yatro paramate cittam
niruddham yogasevaya
yatra cai va tmana tmanam
pasyann atmani tusyati*

यत्र - Where, उपरमते - attains quietude, चित्तम् - mind, निरुद्धम् - restrained, योगसेवया - by the practice of Yoga, यत्र - where, च - and, एव - only, आत्मना - by the Self, आत्मानम् - the Self, पश्यन् - seeing, आत्मनि - in the Self, तष्यति - is satisfied.

20. When the mind, restrained by the practice of Yoga, attains quietude and when seeing the Self by the self, he is satisfied in his own Self ;

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः । २१ ।

21. *sukham atyantikam yat tad
buddhigrahyam atindriyam
veti yatra na cai va yam
sthitah calati tattvatah*

सुखम् - Bliss, आत्यन्तिकम् - infinite, यत् - which, तत् - that, बुद्धिग्राह्यम् - that which can be grasped by reason, अतीन्द्रियम् - transcending the senses, वेत्ति - knows, यत्र - where, न - not, च - and, एव - even, अयम् - this, स्थितः - established, चलति - moves, तत्त्वतः - from the Reality.

21. When he (the Yogi) feels that Infinite bliss—
which can be grasped by the (pure) intellect
and which transcends the senses, wherein established he never moves from the Reality ;

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥ २२ ॥

22. *yam labdhva ca param labham*
manyate na dhukam tatah
yasmin sthito na duhkkena
guruna pi vocalyate

यम् - Which, लब्ध्वा - having obtained, च - and, अपरम् - other, लाभम् - gain, मन्यते - thinks, न - not, अधिकम् - greater, ततः - than that, यस्मिन् - in which, स्थितः - established, न - not, दुःखेन - by sorrow, गुरुणा - (by) heavy, अपि - even, विचाल्यते - is moved.

22. Which, having obtained, he thinks there is no other gain superior to it ; wherein established, he is not moved even by heavy sorrow ;

तं विद्याद्दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३ ॥

23. *tam vidyad duhkhasamyoga-
viiyogam yogasamjnitam
sa niscayena yuktavyo
yogo nirvinnacetasa*

तम् - That, विद्यात् - let (him) know, दुःखसंयोगवियोगम् - a state of severance from union with pain, योगसंज्ञितम् - called by the name of Yoga, सः - that, निश्चयेन - with determination, योक्तव्यः - should be practised, योगः - Yoga, अनिर्विण्णचेतसा - with mind steady and undespairing.

23. Let that be known ; the severance from the union-with-pain is *Yoga*. This *Yoga* should be practised with determination and with a mind steady and undespairing ;

These four verses together give a complete picture of the state of *Yoga* and Krishna ends them with a very powerful call to man that everyone should practise this *Yoga* of Meditation and Self development. In order to encourage man and make him walk this noble path of self-development and self-mastery, Bhagavan explains herein the goal that is gained by the meditator. When the mind is completely restrained, as explained in the above two stanzas, it attains to a serene quietude and in that silence gains an experience of the Self, not as anything separate from itself, but as its own true nature.

This self-rediscovery of the mind, to be itself in fact nothing other than the Divine Conscious Principle, is a

state of Infinite Bliss, inasmuch as this awakening to the cognition of the Self can take place only when the individual-ego has smashed down its limiting adjuncts and has thereby transcended its identifications with the body, mind and intellect.

This bliss is not an objective experience such as is gained during the pleasure of the world, is evidently indicated by the qualification that it "transcends the senses" (*Athu-indriya*). Ordinarily we gain our experiences in the world outside through our sense-organs. If the spiritual masters' promise that the Self-Realisation is a state of bliss, we are ordinarily tempted to accept it as a goal, but when they say that it is beyond the senses the seekers start feeling that the promises of religion are mere bluff. The stanza, therefore, has to insist clearly that this Bliss of Self re-cognition is perceivable through the pure intellect.¹

A doubt may arise now that as a result of all these almost super-human efforts when an individual has at last come to experience this transcendental Bliss, it may provide only a flashy moment of intense living, which may then disappear, demanding all over again similar super-human efforts to re-discover one more similar moment of bliss-experience. To remove this possible misunderstanding the stanza insists "*established wherein he never departs from his Real State.*" The Geeta repeatedly endorses that the experience of the Self is an enduring state from which there is no return.

¹ Intellect that is purified of its *Rajoguna* and *Tamoguna* is called in Vedanta the pure intellect. *Tamas* and *Rajas* respectively create in man the "veiling of Truth" (*Avarana*) and the consequent agitations (*Vikshepa*). When both of them are to a degree removed, to that degree the percentage of *Sattwa* increases in the intellect, and it is called the pure intellect. When an intellect comes under the influence of pure *Sattwa*, it ends in an experience of infinite tranquillity, which is the nature of the Self, and the Self is experienced on thus transcending the intellect.

Even supposing one has gained this Infinite Bliss, will he not again come to all the sorrows that are natural to every worldly being? Will he not thereafter feel as much as anyone else the urge to strive and struggle, to earn and hoard, the thirst to love and get loved, etc.? All these excitements which are the carbuncles upon the shoulders of an imperfect man are denied in a perfect one when the following stanza² explains the Supreme Truth as "having come to which no one can consider any other gain as equal to it, much less ever anything greater.

Even after all these explanations, Lord Himself raises the question which a man of doubts may entertain. It will be quite natural for a student, who is striving to understand Vedanta purely through his intellect, to doubt as to whether the experience of divinity can be maintained even during moments of stress and sorrow and in periods of misery and mournings? In other words: is not religion a mere luxury of the rich and the powerful, a superstitious satisfaction for the weak, a make-belief dream-heaven for the escapist? Can religion and its promised perfection stand unperturbed in all our challenges of life: bereavements, losses, disease, penury, starvation? This doubt—which is quite common in our times too—has been unequivocally answered here with a daring statement that "*wherein, having established one is not moved even by the heaviest sorrow.*"

To summarise: by the quietude of the mind, gained through concentration, when one comes to rediscover one's own Self, his is the Bliss Absolute which through the senses cannot perceive³ and, yet, through a pure intellect⁴ can be lived, and having reached which there is no more any return—having gained which there is no

² VI—22.

³ And therefore, not gross.

⁴ When the intellect has been transcended; since pure *Sattwa*-intellect cannot maintain itself as a time-space-casuality-instrument.

greater gain to strive for and which is not shaken even by the lashings of the greatest tragedies in our existence—is the wondrous Truth that has been indicated by the Geeta as the Self, the goal of all rational men of discrimination and spiritual aspirations.

This Self is to be known ; and the means of knowing this goal, as well as the state of its experience, is called *Yoga* in Geeta.⁵ Here we have one of the noblest, if revolutionary, definitions of *Yoga*.

We had earlier explained ⁶ how Geeta is an incomparable re-statement of the declarations of the Upanishads in the context of the Hindu world at the time of the Mahabharata. The old idea that *Yoga* is a strange phenomenon, too difficult for the ordinary man to practise or to come to experience, has been remodelled here to a more tolerant and divinely all-comprehensive definition. *Yoga* which was till then a technique of religious self-perfection, available only for a reserved few, has been made a public park into which everyone can enter at his freedom and entertain himself as best he can. In this sense of the term, Geeta has been rightly called a revolutionary Bible of Renaissance in Hinduism.

Apart from the divine prerogative of an incarnation we find a dash of revolutionary zeal in Krishna's constitution, both in his emotions and character. And when such a divine revolt enters the field of culture and spirituality, he could not have given a more spectacular definition of *Yoga*, than what he gives us here : "*Yoga*—a state of disunion from every union-with-pain." This re-interpretation of *Yoga* gives not only a striking definition of it, but it is couched in such a beautiful language of contradiction that it arrests the attention of the student and makes him think for himself.

⁵ VI—23.

⁶ Please refer the "General Introduction."

The term *Yoga* means contact. To-day, as it is, man in his imperfections has contacts with only the world of finite objects and, therefore, he ekes out of life only finite joys. These objects of the world are contacted through the instruments of man's body, mind and intellect. Joy ended is the birth of sorrow. Therefore, life through the matter instruments is the life of Pain-*Yoga* (*Dukah-samyoga*).

Detachment from this *Yoga* is naturally a process in which we disconnect (*Viyoga*) ourselves from the fields of objects and their experiences. A total or even a partial divorce from the perceptions of the world of objects is not possible so long as we are using the mechanism of perceptions, the organ of feeling, and the instruments of thinking. To get ourselves detached from the mechanism of perceptions, feelings and thought, would be naturally the total detachment from the Pain-*Yoga*.

Existence of the mind is through its attachment, the mind can never live without attaching itself to something. If it has to detach from one object it is possible for the mind only when it has attached itself to another. For the mind, to detach from pain caused by the unreal is to attach itself to the bliss, that is the nature of the Real. In this sense, the true *Yoga*, which is seeking and establishing an enduring attachment with the Real, is gained only when the seeker cries a halt in his onward march towards pain and deliberately takes a 'right-about-turn' to proceed towards the Real and the Permanent in himself. This wonderful idea has been most expressively brought out in the phrase which Bhagavan gives here as a definition of *Yoga*.

A little scrutiny will clearly enable us to realise that in defining *Yoga* thus, the Gopinis' Lover has not introduced any new ideology into the stock of Knowledge that

was the traditional wealth of the Hindu Scriptures. Till then *Yoga* was emphasized from the standpoint of its goal rather than from the explanation of its means. This over-emphasis of the goal had frightened away the faithful followers from its salutary blessings, and the technique of *Yoga* became a secret boon meant only for a few.

Every true seeker thus got extremely frightened of our religion, and Arjuna was one of them. To persuade him to come and play in the parlour of our religion is the missionary work that Krishna had to undertake in the Geeta. The missionary in Krishna could not have done it better than by explaining to Arjuna that *Yoga* is nothing but a "renunciation of his contact with sorrows" and a direct entry into the halls of Bliss which is his own Real Nature. When we consider this definition of *Yoga* in this light, it is a surprise indeed that it has not become as famous as it should have been, had the students of Geeta really grasped the infinite blessings of this inimitable explanation.

This is to be practised, insists Krishna, with "an eager and decisive mind". To practise with firm resolve and an undespairing heart is the simple secret for the highest success in the practice of meditation, as the *Yoga* with the True is gained through a successful *Viyoga* from the false.

If to be very near the fire-place is to feel uncomfortably warm, to get away from the fire is to reach the embrace of the cool and the comforting atmosphere. If to live among the finite objects and live its limited joys is sorrow, then to get away from them is to enter into the Realm of Bliss which is the Self. This is *Yoga*.

"Further instructions regarding Yoga is now continued after the above short digression. Moreover..."

संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः । २४ ।

24. *samkalpaprabhavan kamams
tyaktva sarvan asesatah
manasai ve ndriyagramam
vinnyamya samantatah*

संकल्पप्रभवान् - Born of *Sankalpa* (imagination),
कामान् - desires, त्यक्त्वा - having abandoned,
सर्वान् - all, अशेषतः - without reserve, मनसा - by the
mind, एव - even, इन्द्रियग्रामम् - the whole group of
senses, विनियम्य - completely restraining, समन्ततः -
from all sides.

24. Abandoning without reserve all desires born of
Sankalpa, and completely restraining the
whole group of senses by the mind from all
sides....

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वानर्किचिदपि चिन्तयेत् । २५ ।

25. *sanaih-sanair uparamed
buddhya dhrtigrhitaya
atmasamstham manah krtra
na kimcid api cmtayet*

शनैः - Gradually, शनैः - gradually, उपरमेतत् -
let him attain quietude, बुद्ध्या - by the intellect,

धृतिगृहीतया - held in firmness, आत्मसंस्थम् - placed in the Self, मनः - the mind, कृत्वा - having made, न - not, किञ्चित् - anything, अपि - even, चिन्तयेत् - let him think.

25. Little by little let him attain quietude by the intellect held in firmness ; having made the mind established in the Self, let him not think of anything.

In the last section the entire goal of Yoga was indicated as that state "*wherein the mind, through the practice of concentration comes to get itself absolutely restrained.*" Later on we have been given a glorious word-picture of the state of enjoyment and perfection that one will be introduced to in this state of meditation. This theoretical exposition has no practical value unless exhaustive instructions are given as to how a diligent seeker can bring about this total mental poise, consciously in a deliberate spiritual act of perfect self-control.

In these two brilliant stanzas the subtle art of meditation has been explained. The sacred secret as to how to bring the mind to a single-pointedness and, thereafter, what we should do with that mind in concentration, and how we should approach the Truth and ultimately realise It, in an act of deliberate and conscious becoming—are all exhaustively indicated in these two significant stanzas.

Renouncing 'all' (*Sarvan*) desires 'fully' (*Aseshatha*) by the mind control all the sense-organs from their entire world of sense-objects. Herein every word demands commentary, since, every phrase leaves a hint, which is so important in ultimately assuring for the seeker a complete success. It is not only sufficient that *all* desires are

renounced, but each desire must be *totally* eradicated. By these two terms (*Sarvan* and *Aśeshatha*), no trace of doubt is left in the mind of the seeker as to the condition of their mental equipoise during the moments of their higher meditation. The term *Aśeshatha* means that even the desire for this perfection in Yoga is to be in the end totally renounced.

“*Renunciation of desires*” is advised here with a very necessary and important qualification ; and unfortunately the unintelligent had been ignoring in Hinduism this significant qualification, and have thus perverted our sacred Religion to act and behave as though it recommends a life of indolence with neither any ambition to achieve nor any desire to accomplish. The term “*born of Sankalpa*” is a very significant term, qualifying the desires that are to be renounced totally and fully. The term ‘*Sankalpa*’ had been already explained earlier⁷ with reference to which we can easily understand that it is the renunciation of such agitation-breeding desires that is meant here.

When once this renunciation of the disturbing desires has been accomplished, the individual’s mind gains strength and stamina to assert itself at first to make the wild horses of the sense-organs more tame and work under greater control, and, soon, comes to restrain all the sense-organs, from all sense-objects, from all sides.

It is scientifically very true that our mind is not able to control our sense-organs, for, it has been rendered weak and thoroughly impotent due to the permanent agitations caused by its own false desires. Once the mind gets strong, as a result of its conquest over the desires, it discovers in itself all the strength and capacity to control the *Indriyas* from all sides. This process of quieten-

⁷ Ibid, stanza 2.

ing the mind can never be accomplished in a hasty action or by any imagination, or by any strange and mysterious method. It is clearly indicated, by the very insistence that the Geeta makes in this stanza, that the seeker should, "*attain quietude as a result of his withdrawal from the world of sense-objects by degrees.*" Slowly and slowly (*Sanaihi-Sanaihi*) the mind gains more and more quietude.

No doubt, when the sense-organs have stopped their mad onrush among their respective objects, a certain amount of mental quietude is gained. The methods of intensifying this inner peace have been indicated in this stanza.⁸

"Patiently, with the intellect, the mind is to be controlled and rested in the contemplation of the Self." This advice is extremely important to every seeker and it gives the next item of the programme for a meditator when he has accomplished, through the exertion of the mind, a total withdrawal of himself from the sense-world during his meditation. A total rejection of the sense-world is possible only during the meditation.

The mind that is thus brought to a relative quietude is next to be controlled by the subtler personality layer in the meditator, which is his intellect. Just as the sense-organs were controlled and restrained by the mind, the mind is now treated by the discriminating intellect and brought under complete restraint. Mind cannot be restrained except by fixing it to the exclusive contemplation of one idea. Mind, we had noticed, is but "*a thought-flow*" and as such, the constant thought of the Nature of the Self is the exercise by which the mind is restrained by the intellect. A mind that has merged in the steady contemplation of the Self becomes, as it were, still, and a

⁸ VI—25—Ibid.

divine quietude comes to pervade its very substance. This is, as it were, the last lap of the journey to which deliberate and conscious action (*Purushartha*) can take any seeker.

Krishna's exhaustive theory which can be practised by any sincere devotee concludes in these two stanzas, with a warning as to what the seeker should avoid at this moment of inward silence and peace ; the Lord does not here instruct the seeker on what he should positively do. The Divine Flute-Player says, "*let him not think of anything,*" when he has reached this state of inward inner peace.

After the "halt-moment"⁹ there is nothing more for the seeker to act and achieve. All that he has to do is to avoid starting any new line of imagination. "*Undisturbed by any new thought wave, let him maintain the inner silence and come to live it more and more deeply,*" is all the instruction that the technique of meditation gives to the meditator. "Knock and thou shalt enter" is the promise ; the 'knocking' is done, and to the Supreme Presence, thou shalt enter ere long, (*Acirath*).

No two simple looking stanzas, nowhere in the spiritual literature of the world, including the books in Hinduism, can claim to have given such an exhaustive amount of useful instructions to a seeker as these two stanzas in the Geeta. Even in the entire bulk of the Divine Song itself, there is no other similar couple of stanzas which can stand a favourable comparison with this perfect pair.

As an instruction to those who have a fickle, unsteady mind, the following is added :

⁹ Read Swamiji's "Meditation and Life".

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् । २६ ।

26. *yato-yato niscarati*
manas cancalam asthiram
tatas-tato nyamyai tad
atmany eva vasam nayet

यतः यतः - From whatever cause, निश्चरति - wanders away, मनः - mind, चञ्चलम् - restless, अस्थिरम् - unsteady, ततः ततः - from that, नियम्य - having restrained, एतत् - this, आत्मनि - in the Self, एव - alone, वशम् - (under) control, नयेत् - let (him) bring.

26. From whatever cause the restless and the unsteady mind wanders away, from that let him restrain it, and bring it back to be under the control of the Self alone.

Every student who tries to understand the above two verses and tries to put them into practice should necessarily come to despair at his own incapacity to control the mind and fix it constantly in the contemplation of the Self. In utter despair every seeker must come to realise that the mind, irresistibly wanders away from its point-of-concentration because the mind is, by nature, restless (*Cancala*) and unsteady (*A-sthira*). It can neither constantly think of one object nor can it consistently think of the different objects. By these two terms qualifying the mind—restlessness and unsteadiness—Krishna has brought out a vivid and realistic picture of the entire mind as it is experienced by all true seekers striving on

the path of Meditation. These two phrases are so impressive that we shall find later on Arjuna himself, while crystallising his doubts into language, uses them, quite naturally.

Thus, during practice even though the seeker has brought his sense-organs to a large extent under his control, still the mind, disturbed by the memories of its past experiences would shoot out in search of its sense-objects. These are the moments of dejection and even despair for the seekers. These wanderings of the mind may be due to very many reasons : the memory of the past, the near presence of some tempting objects, the association of ideas, some attachment or aversion, or may be, even the very spiritual aspiration of the seeker. Lord Krishna's instruction here is very categorical and all-embracing. He says "*whatever be the reason because of which the restless and the unsteady mind wanders away,*" the seeker is not to despair but should understand that it is the nature of the mind to wander and that the very process of meditation is only a technique to stop this wandering.

"*Let him bring it back*" · the seeker is advised to bring back the mind that has, as it were, rushed out into its own self-appointed dissimilar channels of thinking. This withdrawal of the mind may be successful to a degree by sheer will-power, but as soon as it has reached the bosom it will, and it should, rush out again into another fancied line of thinking. Very rarely the *Sadhaks* realise that the mind means "the flow of thought." A steady, motionless mind is no mind at all. And, therefore, in the technique of meditation when the mind is withdrawn from the sense-objects, this very process of withdrawal is to be complemented by a conscious effort, on the part of the meditator, in applying the same mind at once in the contemplation of the Self. This idea has been remarkably well brought out when the Lord com-

plemenis his instruction by the term "bringing it under the sway of the Self alone"

"The following few stanzas explain the effect of the Yoga of Meditation upon its true practitioners":

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।

उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् । २७ ।

27 prasantamanasam hy enan
yoginam sukham uttaman
upaiti santarajasam
brahmabhutam akalmasam

प्रशान्तमनसम् - One of peaceful mind, हि - verily, एनम् - this, योगिनम् - Yogi. सुखम् - bliss, उत्तमम् - supreme, उपैति - comes, शान्तरजसम् - one whose passion is quieted, ब्रह्मभूतम् - Brahman-become, अकल्मषम् - one who is free from sin.

27 Supreme Bliss verily comes to this Yogi whose mind is quite peaceful. whose passion is quietened, who is free from sin and has become Brahman.

As we have just now indicated in the previous stanza, when an individual's mind has been arrested from its agitated roamings in the world of objects, and got fixed consistently upon the Self, by degrees the mind gathers more and more quietude and ultimately when the flow of thoughts ceases, the mind also ends. Where the mind has ended, there the individual is awakened to the experience of the Infinite Nature of the Self. Naturally, the Meditator (Yogi), "comes to the Supreme Bliss."

An intelligent enquirer has every right to question this assertion ; for, in a true science the scientist has no right to assert at random his own opinion without arguments, and to expect the students to gulp it all immediately down ! In the second line of the verse, are given reasons how the quietened mind is the open window through which the prospect of the Self comes to our view. A mind, thus held steadily in the inner atmosphere of thrilled silence, comes to drop off all its previous *Vasanas* : the mind gets “freed from taint” (*A-kalmasham*).

In *Vedanta*, technically, the impurities of the mind are called *Mal*, and it is considered as constituted of the “spiritual non-recognition” and the consequent “mental agitations”. The “veiling power” (*Avarana*) generated by the inertia of the intellect (*Tamas*), creates in its wake the disturbing ‘agitations’ (*Vikshepa*) in the mental zone. The agitation-nuisance in the mind is most prominent when it is under the influence of the *Rajoguna*. This Vedantic theory explaining “the fall of man” to sorrow is fully echoed in the terms used by the Lord here : (a) “passions quietened” (*Shanta-rajagam*) and (b) “freed from taint” (*A-kalmasham*).

An individual in whom all agitations have ceased, and consequently, who has become perfectly freed from his ignorance of the Reality, should naturally be considered as one who had regained his Knowledge of the Self. As long as there is agitation, so long there is the mind ; and the Self identified with the mind, is the Ego—who was the seeker who started meditating—in the above process of meditation. When, as it has been explained, the mediator has exposed his mind to the atmosphere of the inner peace and quietude he comes to end completely all his mental agitations, and, therefore, the Ego rediscovers itself to be nothing other than the Self. This non-dualistic-Truth has been openly declared by the Lord through

His brilliant phrase "Brahman-become" (*Brahma-bhootha*) in describing the man of Self-realisation.

Having thus explained the achievement of a true meditator the Lord explains how this experience of the Self can be thereafter the constant life of the Perfect One .

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते । २८ ।

28. *yunjann evam sada imanam*
yogi vigatakalmasah
sukhera brahmasamsparshan
atyantam sukham asnute

युञ्जन् - Practising Yoga, एवम् - thus, सदा - always, आत्मानम् - the self, योगी - Yogi, विगतकल्मषः - freed from sin, सुखेन - easily, ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शम् - caused by contact with Brahman, अत्यन्तम् - infinite, सुखम् - bliss, अश्नुते - enjoys.

28 The Yogi, always engaging the mind thus (in the practice of Yoga), freed from sins, easily enjoys the Infinite Bliss of 'Brahman-contact'.

Engaging himself thus in the battle for evolution and the consequent inward mastery, a meditator steadily grows out of the shadowy regions of his own spiritual ignorance and imperfections, to smile forth in luxurious extravagance into the sparkling shine of Knowledge. The meditator when he keeps his mind undisturbed in the roaring silence of the within, in the brilliant white-heat of meditation his mind gets purified, like a piece of iron in the smithy's

furnace. In short, as we said earlier and elsewhere ¹⁰ the "halt-moment" is the last possible frontier line upto which human effort can raise the mind.

There it ends itself just as a balloon, as it goes higher and higher, blasts itself in the rarified atmosphere of the higher altitudes, dropping itself down and merging the balloon-space with the space in the altitude. Similarly, the mind too, at the pinnacle of its meditation, shatters itself and drops down leaving the Ego, merged with the Supreme. Just as the space in the balloon automatically and naturally merges with the space outside when once the balloon is exploded, so too when the finite mind is ended "*with ease attains the Infinite Bliss arising out of its contact-with-Brahman.*"

The term 'contact' here has served a convenient handle for the dualists to argue, that the Lord is indicating thereby the existence of the Truth-Principle as separate from the Truth-seeker. Obviously this is absurd. The argument of the dualists can be acceptable only if we can afford to forget the definition of the term *Brahman*. In the Hindu scriptures, *Brahman* is the all-pervading Reality, which is limited by nothing,¹¹ and, therefore, we cannot have a knower-of-Brahman (or a feeler-of-Brahman) who has a separate existence to come in *contact* with *Brahman* and enjoy the Bliss. It can only mean, if a consistent sense is to be read in the scriptures, that the individual seeker *becomes Brahman* and comes to experience the Infinite Beatitude which is the Essence of Truth.

Krishna is here trying to make an agitated, restless inquisitive intellect understand that the positive and dynamic Reality, which can, and shall, be gained when

¹⁰ Read Swamiji's "Meditation and Life". *

¹¹ Refer Swamiji's "Discourse on Isavasya Upanishad", especially stanzas 1, 4 and 5.

the mind and intellect are transcended. Had he said the seeker will become happiness, Arjuna would have hesitated in accepting it, believing that in the Self there is no positive joy. To make his unprepared intellect perceive the experienceable joy of the Infinite, the Divine Cowherd has to borrow a vivid phrase from our ordinary life, and so he says that the meditator “attains the Infinite Bliss through the Brahman-contact.” This phrase “Brahman-contact” should be understood as “Self-contact”—a usage in contrast to the finite joys which we gain ordinarily in life through the “Not-Self-contact.”

In the following stanzas we get a description of the effects of Yoga and the consequent perception of oneness in the pluralistic world.

सर्वभूतस्थनात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः । २९ ।

29. sarvabhutastham atmanam
sarbabhutan ca imani
iksate yogayuktatma
sarvatra samadarsanah

सर्वभूतस्थम् - Abiding in all beings, आत्मानम् - the Self, सर्वभूतानि - all beings, च - and, आत्मनि - in the Self, ईक्षते - sees, योगयुक्तात्मा - one who is harmonised by Yoga, सर्वत्र - everywhere, समदर्शनः - one who sees the same everywhere.

29. With the mind harmonised by Yoga he sees the Self, abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self ; he sees the same everywhere.

All Religions in the world are great, but, indeed, none of them is so perfect as the Religion of the Hindus, if by Religion we mean, the Science of Self-perfection. In this stanza, the author of the Geeta says in unequivocal terms that the perfect man of Self-knowledge or God-Realisation is not merely one who has realised his own divinity, but is one who has equally understood and has come to live in an intimate knowledge and experience of the divinity inherent in all creatures without any distinction whatsoever. The Awareness in us is the Awareness everywhere, in all forms and names, and this Divine Awareness is the very essence in the entire world of perceptions and experiences. To contact the Infinite in us is to contact the Eternal everywhere.

To a true man of realisation in Hinduism there is no more a world to be addressed, even if it be in divine compassion, by the disgusting phrase, "O ! Ye Children of Sin." Like Ramthirtha, a Hindu Saint of Perfection cannot but address the entire living kingdom "O ! Ye Children of Light".¹² This idea of the consummate revelation of "God—I am" gained by the meditator is the peak of perfection, endorsed and aimed at by the Hindu Seers. This idea has been most effectively brought out in this stanza.

This pluralistic phenomeon as a manifestation of and a projection on the Immortal Truth is very well brought

¹² Or address them as "My own Self in the form of ladies and gentlemen."

out in almost all the preceding Chapters. Thus, the essence in all names and forms is the same transcendental Self. Just as the mud in all mud-pots, the gold in all ornaments, the ocean in all waves, the electricity in all bulbs, the Self is the Essence and the Substratum in the world of objects.

From the physical body we perceive the physical world, and from our emotional level we perceive the emotions in others. So too, from our intellectual level alone, can we intelligently contact the ideas working in other intellects. As it has been asserted in the previous Chapter, when an individual transcends himself beyond his intellect he comes to re-discover his own Divine Nature and from that Spiritual Centre, when he looks out he finds the Self to be pervading everywhere. The Self can cognise only the Self everywhere. The Meditator on transcending his intellect, *becomes the Self*; and to the Self there is nothing but the Self everywhere. To the mud, there are no pots; to the gold, there are no ornaments.

With this understanding in our mind, the stanza becomes quite clear when it says, "*he beholds the Self in all beings and equally beholds all beings in the Self.*" Such a Perfect One who has realised the actual unity in the world of diversity alone can afford to entertain the equality of vision in all circumstances and conditions—on a noble Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog and Pariah.¹³

"Now will be described the effect of this perception of unity of the Self."

•

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ ३० ॥

30. *yo mam pasyati sarvatra
sarvam ca mayi pasyati
tasya ham na pranasyami
sa ca me na pranasyati*

यः - Who, माम् - me, पश्यति - sees, सर्वत्र - everywhere, सर्वम् - all, च - and, मयि - in me, पश्यति - sees, तस्य - of him, अहम् - I, न - not, प्रणश्यामि - vanish, सः - he, च - and, मे - to me, न - not, प्रणश्यति - vanishes.

30. He who sees Me everywhere, and sees everything in Me, he never gets separated from Me, nor do I get separated from him.

Earlier we were told that on reaching his goal, the meditator “attains Infinite Bliss of the Brahman-contact.”¹ We explained therein that the term ‘contact’ indicates, by a kindly suggestion, only the non-dual Reality which is the theme of all the Upanishads. Here, in this stanza, we have Krishna’s own commentary upon that term used in a couple of stanzas earlier. Once having awakened to the Self, the perfect Master thereafter recognises everywhere nothing but the Self.

“He who sees Me in all things and sees all things in Me”: in this stanza as everywhere else, the first per-

¹ Ibid, 28.

son singular 'I' and 'Me' is to be understood as the Self. On re-reading the stanza in the light of this annotation, this stanza and the previous together express more fully the pregnant meaning of one of the most famous Upanishadic declarations found in the *Isavasya*.² The second line of the Geeta-verse now under review is almost a commentary upon the last word in the *Upanishad Mantra* referred above, (*Na-vijugupsate*).

"He never becomes separated from me"—on transcending the intellect, the experience of the Ego is not that it sees or perceives or cognises the Eternal but the Ego re-discovers itself to be, in its Essence, nothing but the Self (*Sivoham*). The dreamer, on awakening, himself becomes a waker ; a dreamer can never see or recognise the waker separate from himself.

"Nor do I become separate from Him" : the dualists are rather shy to accept that infinite divinity is their real nature, for, they are, as Ego-centres, conscious of their own bodily vanities and sins. In no clearer term can we more exhaustively describe the unadulterated Truth of the essential divinity in man. Lord Krishna here, is in no way trying to conceal his meaning that a meditator when he has fulfilled the process of detachment from the not-Self, himself *becomes* the Eternal and the Infinite. It may be a staggering truth, but all the same it is the Truth. Those who are hesitating and wavering may well do so and continue disbelieving their own divine potentialities. But the intimate experience of the long hierarchy of Gurus in India and the mystic Saints all over the world, have endorsed this unbelievably plain truth that in Essence, "the Self in an individual is the Self everywhere."

² Read Swamiji's "Discourses on *Isavasya Upanishad*"—*Mantra 4*

At present there is a divorce of ourselves from ourselves, the Ego is a rebel who has exiled himself from his native kingdom, the Self. On rediscovery of the Self, the Ego becomes the Self in such a happy blending of a homogenous whole that thereafter there is no distinction between the Ego and the Self. On awakening, the dreamer becomes the waker; not only does the dreamer become the waker, but the waker can never remain separate from the dreamer. In ordinary divorces either of the party can divorce the other, and yet, the divorced can still maintain an emotional relationship with the one who had separated and gone away. Here, the Lord says that not only the seeker comes to feel the Self-hood, but I, the Self, becomes homogeneously one with Him.

In fact once we understand that "a misguided God is man" it becomes amply clear that rightly guided man re-discovers himself to be nothing other than the Supreme. An actor playing the part of a beggar can never be really a beggar and the moment he drops down the part he plays, he becomes what he was in the past. In reality even while he was playing the role he was not a beggar. This daring declaration of Vedanta, in itself is not at all difficult to understand, but the deluded feels terribly aghast at this revelation and in their own imperfections they refuse to believe this truth. They have not the guts to take the responsibilities of living the Godly life. Krishna's courageous statement in this stanza leaves no pin-hole for any doubt to enter on this sacred conclusion of all the scriptures of the world, especially of the immortal Upanishads.

Emphasising the same idea that the man of perfect self-control and meditation, on realising his Self "becomes the Self," the following is added :

सर्वभूतस्थित यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्तितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ ३१ ॥

31. *sarvabhutasthitam yo mam
bhajaty ekatvam asthitah
sarvatha vartamano pi
sa yogi mayi vartate*

सर्वभूतस्थितम् - Abiding in all beings, यः - who,
माम् - me, भजति - worships, एकत्वम् - in unity,
आस्थितः - established, सर्वथा - in every way, वर्तमानः -
remaining, अपि - also, सः - that, योगी - Yogi, मयि -
in me, वर्तते - abides.

31. He who, being established in unity, worships Me
—who dwells in all beings, that Yogi abides
in Me, whatever be his mode of living:

The meditator, who has integrated himself into a single-pointedness, steadily contemplates (*Bhajati*) upon Me, the Self, which is the essential Spark of Life in all forms in the world. Such an individual, whatever be his activities in the external world, ever lives in 'Me' through a conscious Awareness of the Self. This stanza is given here mainly to indicate that a Man of Realisation need not necessarily retire to some secret cave in some forgotten valley of the Himalayas, but can maintain his Divine Consciousness in all states of existence, in all conditions of life, and under all happy or unhappy circumstances. When a man is ill, no doubt, he has to withdraw himself from the fields of activities, strains, and recreations and go to a sanatorium in order that he may revive. Having regained the maximum natural health, the patient need not thereafter live for ever in the sanatorium, but on the other hand, he can come back to the old fields and live, perhaps, a more active life than ever before.

Similarly, a disintegrated man of unhealthy temperaments is in spiritual life treated through meditation and when he regains his Godly strength and vitality he can certainly re-enter the fields of his earlier games, and yet, maintain in himself the cultural perfections and the spiritual knowledge that he had gained during his spiritual treatment.

It was only a mischievous mis-understanding, that has been deliberately brought into the Hindu traditional thought by the saboteurs of our culture, that had perverted the noble Hindu idealism. There is a very unhealthy tendency among us to believe and preach that spiritual Self-Realisation is a death-knell to all activities. Had it been true we would not have been discussing now this very text book, which is the noble labour of a Man of Realisation, Vyasa, reporting the Wisdom of the Divine personality.

Work in fact can be performed, and really enduring fruits be gained, only when the worker has got himself established in the Self. The labour of the Geeta is to advise Arjuna that work is a means of self-development.

In the same Geeta there is a deeper significance that Krishna, the Perfect, is also on the battle-field exposing himself, perhaps, more to the dangers of the battle than prince Arjuna himself. A Charioteer meets the arrows earlier than the warrior who stands behind him! To enter such a battle-field, armed with nothing but his irresistible smile, and in effect becoming himself almost the uncrowned Lord of the battle-field—wherein the entire war unconsciously comes to revolve round Krishna himself the central personality. This means that a Man of Realisation in all conditions will be able to enter into any activity, and still maintain in himself the unbroken Awareness of the Divine that he is.

By reading this commentary some students might feel that we are bringing an over-emphasis in our over-enthu-

siasm. We can only request them to ponder over, for themselves, the all-comprehensiveness of the words used in the daring statement: "whatever his mode of life be" (*Sarvada-varihomanopi*) the meditator (*Yogi*) "abides in Me."

आत्मौपस्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥ ३२ ॥

32. *atmaupamyena sarvatra*
samam pasyati yo rjuna
sukham va yadi va dukkham
sa yogi paramo matah

आत्मौपस्येन - Through the likeness Similarity of the self, सर्वत्र - everywhere, समम् - equality-पश्यति - sees, य - who, अर्जुन - O Arjuna, सुखम्, pleasure, वा - and, यदि - if, वा - or, दुःखम् - pain, सः - he, योगि - Yogi, परमः - highest, मतः - is regarded.

32 He who, through the likeness (Sameness) of the Self, O Arjuna, sees equality everywhere, be it pleasure or pain, he is regarded as the highest Yogi.

True meditators, well-established in their intellectual understanding and spiritual experience recognise intuitively the Divine Presence immanent in everything. Such men of Perfection see in all activities the glory of the Self and understand their own bodily functions as nothing but the grace of the Self. For them, there is no experience but the Divine. Everything experienced in the gross world and in the subtle realm within, is nothing but an emanation from the Eternal Self. It is a pity that

such an obvious stanza, in the most sacred scripture of the Hindus, is so carelessly overlooked by our *Pundits*.

The educated class has come to glorify the philosophy of simpler scriptures in the world, because, the priests in them are intelligent enough to emphasize the fundamental social rules which their religion insists upon. Of all religions in the world, Hinduism alone is neglecting to emphasize the scriptural quotations which prescribe our social duty and laws of communal living. Here is a stanza, which, in the midst of a disquisition upon the highest philosophical Truth, declares the individual's duty towards others in the Society. In its elaborate implications this stanza is an exhaustive commentary upon the primary biblical instruction "Love Thy neighbour as thyself."

The highest *Yogi*, according to the *Geeta*, is one who feels the pains and joys of others as intimately as if they were his own. The famous ethical rule : "Do unto others as you would be done by" : in itself is a most unpleasant instruction to every ordinary man, because, in his selfishness he is easily tempted to ask why after all should he consider others as himself ? The uninitiated would naturally be tempted to follow the unethical ways of life in his instinctive selfishness.

The previous few stanzas explained why one should love one's neighbours. The *Yogi*, after his experience of the Self, comes to recognise the whole world as himself, and whether one should love or not one's own right-leg is no problem at all for anyone in the world. All the limbs and parts of one's body are equally sacred to an individual, because, one can easily experience one's own intimate identity with all the different parts of the body. If your tongue were to be unconsciously bitten by your own teeth, you will never think of punishing the teeth for the crime they have done ; for, both in the tongue and in the teeth you pervade equally. Once having

realised the Self, when I come to feel everywhere the presence of Me, as the Self, the whole Universe of names and forms becomes for Me the one integrated form in which at all places and at all times "I alone AM."

Such an individual who has in his realisation come to feel the entire universe as his own form, he is called a true Yogi by the Singer of the Geeta. In short, a Seer of Self-Realisation instinctively becomes a divinely compassionate man producing more in the society than what he will therein consume, and creating in the community much more than what he destroys during his lifetime. Love is his very breath, kindness his very sustenance.

In thus concluding the description of a perfect Yogi, with a word-picture of the perfect man's attitude to life, and his relationship with the world outside, no doubt, the eagerly listening student gets extremely fascinated. But the practical man-of-the-world in Arjuna immediately discovers his incapacity to attain the goal pointed out here, and, therefore, the Pandava Prince raises his own doubts, in the form of a question.

"Seeing that the Yoga described—the Yoga of Right Knowledge—is very difficult to attain, Arjuna wishes to know the surest means of gaining this Yoga".

अर्जुन उवाच

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।

एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥ ३३ ॥

ARJUNA UVACA

33. *yo yam yogas tvaya proktah
samyena madhusudana
etasya ham na pasyami
cancalatvat sthitim sthiram*

यः - Which, अयम् - this, योगः -Yoga, त्वया - by thee, प्रोक्तः - taught, साम्येन - by equanimity, मधुसूदन - O slayer of Madhu, एतस्य - its, अहम् - I, न - not, पश्यामि - see, चञ्चलत्वात् - from restlessness, स्थितिम् - continuance, स्थिराम् - steady.

ARJUNA SAID :

33. This Yoga of Equanimity, taught by Thee, O slayer of Madhu, I see not its enduring continuity, because of the restlessness (of the mind).

The most practical minded Aryan that he was, Arjuna, the man of action, could not at all be moved by the mere poetic beauty of any ideology. He was thirsty to live and, therefore, the above mentioned philosophy of meditation and successful victory over the cravings of the flesh could not charm him away to any idle humour. He shot at point blank very realistic questions to explode the seemingly impracticable philosophy that had been explained in this Chapter.

‘Detachment from pain-attachments’ (*Dukha-samyoga-viyoga*) was the definition of Yoga that the originality in Krishna could provide in this Chapter. The process of achieving a substantial success in this “Detachment-Yoga” has been explained herein as the technique of withdrawing the mind from the objects, by lifting it to the planes of higher contemplations. The theory is that a redeemed mind when it comes to a single-pointed devotion in the contemplation of the Self, becomes stilled, and ends its ego-centric pilgrimage through the ignorance of the Truth and the consequent misjudgement of the world.

The goal pointed out—perfect equanimity in all conditions, challenges and circumstances of life—is no doubt,

an admirable gain, but the technique seems to be a sheer poetic fantasy which has no roots on the soils of the realistic actualities of life. The acute, though gross, intellect of Arjuna, systematically approaching the Science of Self-Realisation, discovers, as it were, a dangerous missing-link in the chain of its arguments. Mercilessly the man of war is hammering at this weak point with almost a sure confidence that he will expose immediately the hollowness of Krishna's philosophy.

Thus Arjuna, tauntingly points out "*Thus Yoga which you have been teaching me,*" which has been indicated by the mental tranquillity, is not at all practicable. The argument given out by Arjuna and the daring with which he directly faces his teacher, show the characteristic spirit of a true student of Vedānta. Blind faith can give no entry into the fields of pure spiritualism. The teachers are to answer and clear all the doubts of the seekers. But, in questioning the philosophy expounded by a teacher, the students must indicate the logical arguments by which they had come to feel the particular weakness in that philosophy. Here, Arjuna gives all his arguments, to show why the state of evenness of mind is a dream as long as the human mind is by nature 'restless' in its own agitations.

Even in thus contradicting the philosophy, Arjuna is extremely careful. He does not say that the mental equanimity cannot be *at all* gained through meditation. But his doubt is that it cannot be an experience of "*long endurance*". The implication is that, even if after years of practice the mind were to be won over, the experience of the Self can only be momentary. And, although, a full 'experience' of the Infinite can be had in that split-moment, this direct realisation cannot be maintained by the Man of Knowledge for any length of time, because, the mind is by nature essentially ever restless.

It is quite interesting, how a receptive student like Arjuna, gathers unto himself the style and language,

the vocabulary and diction of his teacher. The terms qualifying the mind, used here by Arjuna, are all terms that have been borrowed from the Lord's own declaration earlier.³

As if making himself more clear to his teacher, Arjuna adds the following stanza which in fact, takes the edge off from the spearhead of his logic in the previous stanza.

चञ्चलं हि मनःकृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।

तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ ३४ ॥

34. *cancalam hi manah krsna
pramathi balavad drdham
tasya ham nigraham manye
vayor wa suduskaram*

चञ्चलम् - Restless, हि - verily, मनः - the mind, कृष्ण - O Krishna, प्रमाथि - turbulent, बलवत् - strong, दृढम् - unyielding, तस्य - of it, अहम् - I, निग्रहम् - control, मन्ये - think, वायोः - of the wind, इव - as, सुदुष्करम् - difficult to do.

34. The mind verily is, O Krishna, restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding ; I deem it quite (as) difficult to control (it) as that of the wind.

There is an atmosphere of intimacy and love, surrender and respect, in the very note of helplessness in Arjuna's words in this stanza. This art of making an emotion echo through the rhythm of the words is often

³ Ibid, 26, "Maṇa-cancala-masthīram".

met with in Sanskrit although, rarely, if ever at all, we see them in English poetry⁴ also.

There is an ocean of difference between a modern man condemning the sacred scriptures of our land and a true seeker questioning the same philosophy in his honest attempt to understand the full import and the wealth of suggestiveness contained therein. In his acute awareness, Arjuna, as it were, realises, deep within himself, his own subjective experience that a mind cannot be stilled—as it is ever “*turbulent, strong, and unyielding.*”

These three terms are quite pregnant with their own imports. Turbulancy shows not only the speed in the flow of thoughts but also their restlessness and agitations causing on the surface uneven waves raising all in pell-mell. Not only that the flood of thoughts flow fast and rough, but having reached its destination of some sense-object or the other, it gets itself so powerfully attached to it, that it becomes strong in its new roots. Mind in turbulence is, no doubt, difficult to arrest; when it gets strongly rivetted, it is difficult to pluck it away from its attachment; and the third characteristic feature of the mind is that when it has flown into any channel of its own choice, for the moment, it is so “*unyielding*” that it is impossible for the individual to pull it back from its flight and persuade it to stay at the determined point of concentration. It is to be remembered that this was the technique advised by Krishna for the practice of meditation earlier in this Chapter.⁵

The strength and vigour, the vivacity and treachery, the penetrativeness and all-pervasiveness of the mind,

⁴ “The curfew tolls the knell of parting day”—Grey’s ‘Elegy’.

⁵ Ibid, 26.

cannot be better expressed than by the simile given here "*as that of the wind.*" In raising this question, Arjuna is asking Krishna, some practical tips by which he can gain a perfect control over the stormy nature of "*the unyielding, strong, turbulent and restless mind.*" Herein, unlike in the previous stanza,⁶ Lord is addressed by His most familiar term 'Krishna'; a word that comes from the root *Kṛish* = to scrape. The term Krishna is applicable to the Self because, on realisation of the True, the delusory threats of the mind and the consequent dreamy *vasanas* will all be scraped from our cognition.

The bloody hands of the dreamer gets automatically cleaned and all the moral stigma attached to the murder completely falls off, when he wakes up. Similarly, the mind and its onslaughts, its *vasanas* and their tyranny, the intellect and its quest, the physical body and its appetites all, all end with the re-discovery of the true nature of the Self. Therefore, the poet-philosopher Vyasa in his immortal classic, Mahabharata, paints the inner Self as Lord "Krishna", the Flute-bearer of Brindavan. In Sanskrit this is a special art unknown to any other language in the world: using of a proper noun to indicate the peculiar quality of the person that is to be suggested in the context of the narration.

Accepting the arguments of Arjuna, the Lord answers to prove that there is a method by which the invincible mind can be brought under control:

श्रीभगवानुवाच

असंशयं मेहो ब्रूहि मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ ३५ ॥

⁶ Wherein He was addressed as "the destroyer of the Demon, Madhu—Madhusudana."

SRIBHAGAVAN UVACA

35. *asamsayam mahabaho*
mano durnigraham calam
abhyasena tu kaunteya
vairagyena ca grahyate

असंशयम् - Undoubtedly, महाबाहो - O mighty-armed, मनः - the mind, दुर्निग्रहम् - difficult to control, चलम् - restless, अभ्यासेन - by practice, तु - but, कौन्तेय - O Son of Kunti, वैराग्येण - by dispassion, च - and, गृह्यते - is restrained.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID :

35. Undoubtedly, O mighty-armed, the mind is difficult to control and is restless ; but, by practice, O Son of Kunti, and by dispassion it is restrained.

Vyasa the immortal dramatist in his preoccupations with the philosophical explanations, does not for a moment drop down the mantle of poetry off his shoulders. This is in fact the incomparable glory of the poet-philosopher *Vyasa*. Indeed, there is a bustling moment of dramatic possibility at this point in *Geeta*, which any hasty artist might overlook ; but not *Vyasa*. And, in fact, it is such artistic moments, fulfilled so magnanimously, that give *Geeta* the compelling charm of a magic even to those who do not understand it at all !!

Krishna knew his Arjuna : the warrior, the man of action, the daring adventurer, and the ruthless realist. When such a tumultuous personality spurs himself out with a drawn dagger to argue and condemn the noble philosophy of a true missionary, the teacher must have

the balance of mind to approach the rebel-intellect with divine understanding and extreme tact. At this juncture, in the Geeta, the situation, to put it in a nutshell, is this. Lord propounds a theory that mind stilled is Self gained and Arjuna argues that mind cannot be stilled and so Self cannot be gained.

Both of them are arguing upon the possibility or otherwise of realising the Self, in the subtle kingdom within, and, therefore, therein no objective demonstration is ever possible. In the material sciences of the world, all arguments between scientists can be finally determined and completely proved on the laboratory tables and on graph-papers. But in the case of the subjective science, it being a transaction between two equally integrated personalities, arguments as such, though unavoidable, must be very carefully directed. And, he is a true missionary who is a master of the psychology of his opponent. Conversion of another's intellect into the right channels is no rough act of any wood-cutter or any grave-digger. It is the hard but careful art of cutting jewels; he is to shape the heart of another and bring out of it more light.

When an Arjuna-like man gets hold of an idea in all enthusiasm, the best technique is to yield to him. "Stoop to conquer" is the secret of success in philosophical discussions, especially in such moments of mental perversions natural in the ignorant. Thus, the great psychologist, Krishna, with the very first word in his reply, quietly disarms his mighty adversary, and immediately tickles the vanity of the warrior with the terms, "no doubt, O! Mighty-armed". Krishna admits that the mind is turbulent, strong, unyielding and restless and that it is very difficult to control, and therefore, the goal of perfect and enduring tranquillity cannot be *easily* achieved.

By this admission Arjuna is flattered; all the more he is mentally brought to a restful peace by reminding

him that he is a mighty-armed soldier in life. The taunting implication in it is obvious, to achieve the impossible and the difficult is the job of the mighty-armed; it is no glory for a warrior to claim that he plucked half-a-dozen flowers from a bush in his own court-yard. The mind is, no doubt, a great enemy—but, the greater the enemy, the nobler also is the victory.

In the second line of this stanza, again, the eternal missionary in Krishna very carefully weighs his words and uses the most appropriate terms to soothe the mind of Arjuna. "*O Son of Kunti, it can be brought under control*" is an assertion which comes only as the last word in the entire Stanza. Through practice and renunciation, mind can be brought under reigns in the beginning, and ultimately to a perfect 'halt'—is the confident, reassuring declaration of the Lord in the Geeta.

Renunciation has been already described earlier in the Geeta as *Sannyas* which was defined as renunciation of (a) all clinging attachments to the objects of the world, (b) lingering expectations of the fruits of action. These two are the main causes for the agitation of thoughts, which again thickens the flood of the thought-flow and makes the mind uncontrollable. As Sankara describes 'practice' (*Abhyas*) is "constant repetition of the same idea regarding one and the same object-of-thought."⁷ This consistency of thought during steady meditation generally gets diverted and dissipated because of the frequent explosive eruptions of desires. Whipped by new desires, that are rising at every moment, the thoughts wander into dissimilar channels of activities, upsetting the inner equilibrium, and thereby shattering the true virulence of the inner personality.

Thus viewed, practice strengthens renunciation and detachment (*Vairagya*) deepens meditation (*Abhyas*).

⁷ Read Swami's "Meditation and Life".

Hand in hand each strengthening the other, the progress is maintained.

In scriptural text books the arrangement of words is to be carefully noted, for, in all cases the words are arranged in a descending order of importance. To every seeker the question comes at one time or the other, whether he should wait for the spirit of detachment voluntarily arriving in his mind, or should he start his practice ? The majority wait in vain for the accidental moment of *Vairagya* before they start their *Abhyas*. Geeta in this stanza clearly declares that such an expectation is as ridiculous as waiting for the harvest of the crops which we never sowed !

Let us analyse life, question its experiences, argue with ourselves and note carefully how much we put into life and how much as a return we gain from life. When we become aware of the deficit balance each time, we of necessity shall start enquiring how our life can be more profitably re-organised so that our entire coffers of joy and happiness can be replenished to their brim. Soon, the study of the *Sastras* will follow which will give us an inkling to the wonders of the moral life, the wisdom of the ethical values, the joys of self-control, the thrills of growth and the suffocation of the ego-centric little-life.

From the moment we are trying to become aware of our own lives, we are in the realm of 'practice' (*Abhyas*). As a result of this, the detachment that comes to us automatically is the true and the enduring 'detachment' (*Vairagya*). All else is a sham show of stupid self-denial, which cramps a human soul and distorted and perverts his intelligence into an ugly figure riddled with its own hysterical ravings and bleeding with its own psychological ulcers. *Vairagya* born out of *Abhyas* alone, is the charter for free spiritual growth : 'Of your own accord never renounce anything. Let your attachments

with things of their own accord, drop off as a result of your intellectual growth into the higher planes of better understanding and truer estimation of things and beings, happenings and behaviours, occurrences and incidents, around you in life. When, through right 'practice', enduring 'detachment' has come rushing in full gush into our inner lives, then the mind comes under our control, because, it has no more any world of pluralistic objects to roam in and the only world where it has a free access is the world of equanimity and sameness.⁸

"What then will be the lot of those who have no self-control?"

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः

वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ ३६ ॥

36. *asamyatatmana yogo*

dusprapa iti me matih

vasyatmana tu yatata

sakyo vaptum upayatah

असंयतात्मना - By a man of uncontrolled self,
योगः - Yoga, दुष्प्रापः - hard to attain, इति - thus,
मे - my, मतिः - opinion, वश्यात्मना - by the self-
controlled one, तु - but, यतता - by the striving one,
शक्यः - possible, अवाप्तुम् - to obtain, उपायतः - by
(proper) means.

36. Yoga, I think, is hard to be attained by one of uncontrolled self; but the self-controlled, striving can obtain it by (proper) means.

In the previous stanza extreme emphasis was placed on practice. But what constitutes the spiritual (*Abhyas*)

⁸ Chapter V—19, Ibid, 32.

was not indicated even indirectly in that verse. A scientific book that leaves missing links, either in its arguments or in its logic, is no text book at all. In the stanza under review Krishna is giving a direct clue to what he meant by the term *Abhyas*.

Though the Lord's statement expresses quite an obvious truth, even a divine master like Krishna, dares not declare in Hinduism any statement of his own with the authority of a scriptural text. At best, any interpreter of religion can only declare his *opinion*. All intelligent men and serious students of the scriptures have the right to entertain their own individual opinions, conclusions and convictions, based upon logic and personal experiences. But these opinions can change, and they do keep on changing, from time and time, inasmuch as they depend entirely upon the conditions of the times and the types of minds that come to evaluate and declare these opinions. In Sanskrit the term *Matam* means 'opinion'. The conclusions or opinions of Christ, Mohamed, Krishna, Buddha and others become religious, seemingly different from one another. But all of them have the same fundamental truths which constitute what they term in Sanskrit as *Dharma*.

As his personal opinion the Divine Singer of the Geeta declares here that the uncontrolled and, therefore, a totally dissipated personality, cannot bring into the pursuit of religion the necessary amount of dynamic vigour and vitality to sustain him till he reaches the peak of his Self re-discovery. It is, therefore said, "*Yoga is hard to be attained by one of uncontrolled self.*"

An individual who barter himself to slave among the sense-objects according to the mad dictates of his flesh—or one who dances to the death-tunes sung by his voluptuous mind—or one who roams about endlessly to fulfil the tyrannical orders of a drunken intellect—such an one has no peace of mind nor the strength of sustained

aspiration to goad him on towards the Temple of Truth within himself.

So long as the sense-organs are not properly controlled, 'the agitations of the mind' cannot be pacified. An agitated mind is no instrument, either for listening or for reflection or for meditation—and without these three, the 'veiling power' cannot be rolled up. The agitations (*Vikshepa*) and veiling (*Avarana*) are caused by 'activity' (*Rajas*) and 'in-activity' (*Tamas*); and we have already found that without controlling these two temperaments the 'un-activity' (*Sattwa*) cannot come to predominate in the seeker.⁹

It is natural in all discussions, that we generally present our own arguments against a team of opposite arguments so that the discriminative intellect of the listener may, by contrast, come easily to judge the acceptability and reasonableness of our own view-point. Krishna uses here this common-place technique of every drawing-room, when he, in the second line, explains, as a contrast, how "*the self-controlled, striving hard, by right means, can obtain It.*" Self-control, achieved through the process of a total withdrawal of the sense-organs from their respective objects is, no doubt, the beginning of the spiritual life.

Even in ordinary life when we want to achieve something solid, the man-of-the-world will have to live, to a large extent, in self-denial. The life of a candidate during the election time, of a student before his examinations, of an actor or a dancer before his first great reception... are all examples wherein we find that the individuals deny themselves all their idle preoccupations in their own anxiety to win their successes in their respective fields. If, for material gains and flimsy ephemeral glories, we have to deny ourselves, in order to acquire

⁹ Refer Fall and Rise of Man: in Swamiji's "Discourses on Kenopanishad".

and possess the desirable, how much more should we come to deny ourselves in the world outside in order to win the glories of the eternal and the permanent, the Infinite and the Abolute Bliss of the Self ?

Not only is it sufficient that the seeker is seemingly denying himself all the sense-objects. This seems to be the most general mis-understanding among almost all sincere seekers in India to-day. In the name of religion or spiritual practice, they, atleast for some years, seem to live in self-denial and self-punishments, shamelessly insulting themselves and carelessly persecuting their own physical urges and even biological needs. This sort of a devilish and suicidal self-condemning tyranny over one-self, always ends in an outburst of satanic forces from the very seeker.

We do not find in such dull-witted practitioners any blossoming of their spiritual fragrance, but, on the other hand, we see them metamorphosed into monsters, who are at best a scandal even to the worst of civilisations known in history ! Many of the modern educated men point out to such damaged instances and declare that religion only wrecks human life and that it can add no beauty to the personality !! They can be considered as wise in their judgements only in an age when we start accepting that cooking is dangerous, because, a few cooks get their fingers burnt in the kitchen !!!

Lest the students of Geeta also fall a prey to such a misunderstood and a mis-conceived spiritualism, Bhagavan indicates here that the self-controlled seeker can by "*striving rightly obtain It*". Not going to the cinemas and not visiting the play-grounds, are not in themselves assurances that the students will pass their examinations. The time wasted in such merry-making must be properly utilised in intelligent study, which alone can vouchsafe for them a success in their examinations. Here, too, a student appearing for an examination in

mathematics, if he were to read the whole night his Geography text books, he may not thereby assure for himself any glorious success ; he must strive rightly in order that he may gain the true success.

Similarly, a seeker when he has, through self-control, conserved in himself energies, which would otherwise have got dissipated in the gutters of sensuality, he must know how to direct those energies through the right channels whereby he can get himself detached from his misconceived self-projections and ultimately realise for himself his own Self-Hood. Such an intelligent seeker “*can obtain It*” is the optimistic philosophy of this ever-smiling God of the Hindus, Lord Krishna.

With these two verses, Krishna exhaustively answers the question raised by Arjuna, and what follows clearly indicates that the Pandava Prince has been convinced by the Lord's reply.

The question yet remains of what would be the lot of one, “self-controlled, and striving hard through right means,” who could not yet fulfil and reach the goal?

अर्जुन उवाच

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।

अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥ ३७ ॥

ARJUNA UVACA

37. *ayatih sraddhaya peto*
yogac calitamanasah
aprapya yogasamsiddhim
kam gatim krsna gacchati

अयतिः - Uncontrolled, श्रद्धया - by faith, उपेतः - possessed, योगात् - from Yoga, चलितमानसः - one

whose mind wanders away, अप्राप्य - not having attained, योगसंसिद्धिम् - perfection in Yoga, काम् - which, गतिम् - end, कृष्ण - O Krishna, गच्छति - meets.

ARJUNA SAID :

37. He who, though possessed of faith, is unable to control himself, whose mind wanders away from Yoga, to what end does he, having failed to attain perfection in Yoga, go, O Krishna ?

In these and the following two stanzas Veda Vyasa makes Arjuna raise a pertinent question, so that Krishna may get yet another chance to bring right under the foot-light, the supremely optimistic philosophy of Vedanta. None, striving on the Path Divine, can ever be destroyed ; and whatever he accomplishes will be faithfully carried over as a legacy for the individualised-self in its pursuit here or in the hereafter. Each to-day is an added link in the endless chain of dead-and-gone yesterdays. The lengthening chain continues growing, by adding to itself link after link all the yesterdays. Death is only one of the incidents in a human existence and the to-morrow has no accidental or arbitrary beginning but it is only a perfect continuation of the to-day.

Carefully voicing forth his vague doubt, Arjuna asks as to what will happen to one, who strives with *Sraddha*, but fails to accomplish complete self-control during his life-time, or due to lack of sufficient self-control falls from Yoga ? The idea is that such an individual may thereby come to lose both the little joys of the sense-objects and the Absolute Bliss in the hereafter. The Vedantins, even while they condemn the mere life of sense-objects, do not, even for a moment, deny the fact that there are traces of joy in the sense life also. According to them, daring thinkers as they were, the joys of the

sense-objects (*Vishaya Ananda*) are in their essence nothing other than glimpses of the Spiritual Bliss (*Brahmananda*). The secret import of the question is that those who faithfully follow Krishna's theory may come to lose both the chances of experiencing the finite and the Infinite joy.

Such a seeker striving all his life to live in self-control will be a conscious escapist—avoiding all the finite joy-temptations in the gross world here. But, if, the uncertain factor, called death, were to creep in to clip the thread of his life with the scissors of time, he will be losing his chances of gaining the Absolute Beatitude which is the goal that Lord Krishna seems to point out in his Divine Song. Again, supposing the seeker due to lack of self-control falls from Yoga? To win in Yoga, no doubt, is a great victory; a gain *par-excellence*. But if, in the race, one were to get knocked down by the stealthy club of sensuousness, he stands to lose both in the here and in the hereafter. Naturally, Arjuna wants some reassurances from Krishna as to what will happen to such an individual.

In this stanza also we must note very carefully that the term *Sraddha* is not some maddening superstition which encourages a blind faith. According to Sankara¹⁰ *Sraddha* is the right intellectual apprehension of the deeper imports and the fuller significances of what the teachers teach and the scriptures declare. The inspired devotion that springs up in a bosom, from among its solid intellectual convictions, gained through a true appreciation, is the mighty power, called faith, "that can move mountains" and "bring the very heavens to the earth."

¹⁰ Refer "Talks on Vivekachoodamani"—by Swami Chinmaya.

To throw more colour on to the picture of the spiritual desperado, whom Arjuna has attempted to paint in the previous stanza, the following is added :

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।

अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥ ३८ ॥

38. *kaccin no bhayavibhrastas*
chinnabhram iva nasyati
apratistho mahabaho
vimudho brahmanah pathi

कच्चित् - Is it that ? न - not, उभयविभ्रष्टः - fallen from both, छिन्नम् - rent, अभ्रम् - cloud. इव - like, नश्यति - perishes, अप्रतिष्ठः - supportless, महाबाहो - O mighty-armed, विमूढः - deluded, ब्रह्मणः - of Brahman, पथि - in the path.

38. Fallen from both, does he not, O mighty-armed, perish like a rent cloud, supportless, and deluded in the path of Brahman ?

Emphasizing in more elaborate terms, the doubt already expressed earlier, Arjuna now enquires as to what happens to that seeker, who, although he strives hard with faith, but for want of restraint falls from Yoga and thus fails to carry his efforts to the point of complete success. Will his efforts be baulked both here and hereafter ? “*Fallen away from both*” is a very

suggestive term which can be applied also to both the spiritual Paths so far described : Knowledge and Action.

A sincere wayfarer faithfully treading the path of self-control to re-discover the Self may get lost, if death were to rob him on his way, or for want of complete self-control he may fall from the Yoga. The striking example with which this idea is being brought out by Arjuna is one of the most brilliant poetic strokes in the entire Geeta. This is often quoted in literary circles whenever an attempt is made to evaluate Vyasa, the poet, in Sanskrit literature.

In summer, mushroom-shaped floating castles of clouds raise themselves from behind the mountains to peep upon the valleys below. At the touch of some strong current of wind the mass takes to flight, leaving along its trail small bits of fleazy cloud-lets. These little ones, torn away from the parental bulk, get knocked about at the mercy of every wandering breeze. Such summer cloud-lets aimlessly kicked about according to the whims and fancies of the winds can never fulfil the expectations of the farmers or the clammer of the thirsty. Unfulfilling themselves, they get tossed hither and thither without any haven for themselves. “*Like the rent cloud*”, Arjuna asks, “will not the aspiring self in the seeker be forced to roam about and ultimately get lost in the vast amphitheatre of the Universe ? ”

“ *Why does Arjuna ask this question ?* ”

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।

त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न विपद्यते ॥ ३९ ॥

39. *etan me samsayam krsna
chettum arhasy asesatah
tvadanyah samsayasya sya
chetta na hy upapadyate*

एतत् - This, मे - my, संशयम् - doubt, कृष्ण - O Krishna, छेत्तुम् - to dispel, अर्हसि - ought to, अशेषतः - completely, त्वत् - than you, अन्यः - another, संशयस्य - of doubt, अस्य - of this, छेत्ता - dispeller, न - not, हि - verily, उपपद्यते - is fit.

39. This doubt of mine, O Krishna, please dispel completely ; because, it is not possible for any one but you to dispel this doubt.

In this concluding verse of this section, Arjuna frankly asks, “ *This doubt of mine, O Krishna, you should completely dispel* ”.

“The Eternal Scrapper”, Lord Krishna, alone has the Pure Wisdom that can rub out this doubt and quieten the agitations caused by it, in the bosom of Arjuna. With this, his question, it becomes amply clear that his previous doubt has been totally dispelled. The earlier doubt was that : “ Self-Realisation is impossible since the mind which is ever turbulent can never be stilled ”. The reply of the Lord has soothened out this knotty frill in Arjuna’s mind.

Every true seeker, if he be diligent enough, must come to discover a couple of new doubts where a previously existing doubt has been cleared. The process of slowly eliminating all these doubts is the process of *Vichar* that is practised both consciously and unconsciously during all *Satsangs*.

The glorious life of the hereafter assured to every evolver is classified hereunder, on the basis of the intensity of the mental attitude and the spiritual aptitude in each one of them.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।

न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतितात गच्छति ॥ ४० ॥

SRI BHAGAVAN UVACA

40. *partha nai ve ha na mutra
vinasas tasya vidyate
na hi kalyanakrt kascid
durgatim tata gacchati*

पार्थ - O Partha, न - not, एव - verily, इह - here, न - not, अमुत्र - in the next world, विनाशः - destruction, तस्य - of him, विद्यते - is, न - not, हि - verily, कल्याणकृत् - he who does good, कश्चित् - any-one, दुर्गतिम् - bad state or grief, तात - O my son, गच्छति - goes.

THE BLESSED LORD said :

40. O Partha, neither in this world, nor in the next world is there destruction for him ; none, verily, who strives to do good, O my son, ever comes to grief.

In the following five stanzas Bhagavan tries to explain the path of progress of a seeker whose spiritual endeavours have been either clipped by an untimely death or arrested by the intervention of some sensuous temptation. At the very opening of this section, Krishna assures, with all the vehemence at his command, that “*neither here nor in the hereafter is there for him any destruction, who performs the right action*”.

This statement is not a mere emotional assurance built upon some blind faith or a godly declaration that is to be swallowed down by the faithful, without a wink, because, they are the sacred words that have come from the lips of a Prophet. The Hindus do not accept any divine prerogative even for their Gods by which they can by-pass the individual intellect and the rules of logic. Religion is a 'Science of Life' and it must explain completely the why and the wherefor of its practices.

Obedient to this incomparable trait in our culture Krishna supports his statement with the philosophical truth, "*Never for the doer of good, dear son, a woeful end*". The one who acts rightly in the present can come to no grief in the future, because, the future is but a product of the present, and the good is that which yields but success and joy in the future.

The fear of Arjuna that the unsuccessful *Yogin*—a seeker obstructed and got held up on the path—will get lost "*as a rent cloud*" here and in the hereafter, has risen from his failure to appreciate the logical continuity and the perfect sequence that is ever in life. To consider that death is the end of an existence starting with the accident of birth, is a philosophy too rudimentary to be considered as complete and exhaustive. In fact, it is only with a stretch of imagination that we can consider such theory as a philosophy.

Daring intellects bravely pushing ahead in the quest to understand and comprehend the laws of life, and the meaning and purpose of the Universe, cannot but accept that the existence of an individual in its present embodiment is but a single pearl in the Necklace of Infinite beauty adorning the bosom of Truth. The present is the product of the past, and thought by thought, action by action, knowledge by knowledge, we are creating ourselves the blue-print for our own future. Therefore, the

Hindus believe in previous lives as well as in future births, which is otherwise called the theory of Re-incarnation.

Based upon this principle Krishna insists that no seeker is ever lost, although he may slip and fall, or even end his present manifestation ; tomorrow is but today continued.

The brilliant Lord of laughter and joy, Krishna, is the fittest mouth-piece to declare the Philosophy of Bliss, which is Vedanta. Never can we find a more optimistic note of hope and cheer in any philosophy in the world, as in the Hindu view-of-life. And, Geeta, the Bible of the Hindus, truly portrays amidst peels of its thundering joys, its celestial message of hope to mankind. In the entire length of the Geeta nowhere else can we find such a complete assurance of hope as in the second line of this stanza : *“ the doer of good, O my son, never comes to grief ”*.

In addressing Arjuna as *“ O my Son ”* Krishna is here not only following the traditional vocabulary of the Upanishads but there is a deeper significance. A father however deceitful, cunning and cruel a brute he may be to everyone else in the world, he cannot ever come to advise his own son of a false philosophy. With a fatherly love, the man of Wisdom in Krishna, is assuring Arjuna that one who is striving in the direction of evolution shall never come to suffer any real fall. On the ladder of the cultural growth, each step that is placed forward is, an ascent towards the Absolute Perfection.

What exactly would be the destiny of a man who could not complete his pilgrimage in Yoga ? “What then happens to him ? ”

**प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ ॥ ४१ ॥**

41. *prapya punyakrtam lokan*
usitva sasvatih samah
sucinam srimatam gehe
yogabhrasto bhijayate

प्राप्य - Having attained, पुण्यकृताम् - of the righteous, लोकान् - worlds, उषित्वा - having dwelt, शाश्वतीः - everlasting, समाः - years, शुचीनाम् - of the pure, श्रीमताम् - of the wealthy, गेहे - in the house, योगभ्रष्टः - one fallen from Yoga, अभिजायते - is born.

41. Having attained to the worlds of the righteous and having dwelt there for everlasting (long) years, he who had fallen from Yoga, is born again in the house of the pure and the wealthy.

The hereafter is ordered by the actions performed and the motives entertained here. Actions in life can be mainly classified as *good* and *evil*; and the pursuers of the evil can only slip down the path of evolution. Those who are doing good work alone can start their climb on to the higher points on the Tower of their spiritual progress. Even here, our text books make a careful distinction and classify all good activities under two main headings: (a) actions performed with desires, (b) and those that are performed in a spirit of dedicated love and worship. Since reactions to our actions depend entirely upon the motives that propel our actions, the results accrued from selfish and selfless activities must necessarily differ among themselves. Naturally, there must be different routes of progress to the same Pinnacle of Perfection. All of them are being indicated here in the different stanzas of this section.

Those who have been living here in the life, employing themselves in the worship of the Lord with desire for heavenly enjoyments, they shall be, after their death, reaching those planes of consciousness, and having exhausted their desires therein they will be taking their births again here in the world, “*in the houses of the pure and the prosperous*”. In short, all burning desires of every human creature will be fulfilled at one time or the other, if the desire is strong enough and if it is not divorced from intense activities appropriate for their fulfilment.

But what happens to those who are pursuing the good, in a spirit of selfless dedication ?

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम्
एतद्दि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् । ४२ ।

42. *athava yoginam eva
kule bhavati dhimatam
etad dhi durlabhataram
loke janma yad idrsam*

अथवा - Or, योगिनाम् - of Yogis, एव - even, कुले - in the family, भवति - is born, धीमताम् - of the wise, एतत् - this, दि - verily, दुर्लभतरम् - very difficult, लोके - in the world, जन्म - birth, यत् - which, ईदृशम् - like this.

42. Or, he is even born in the family of the wise Yogis ; verily, a birth like this is very difficult to obtain in this world.

The other type, which makes a direct and immediate manifestation, in which the continuity of the past is

clearly noticeable, is the theme of this stanza. Those who are pursuing selfless *Upasanas* gain thereby more and more in their inner integration, and as a result of it they become dynamic minds capable of the highest meditation. The more integrated a personality is the more spiritual he becomes and, therefore, he must be given a chance to fulfil himself, not in heaven, which is a plane for enjoyment, but he must arrive right here to strive more diligently and achieve the highest. Such an ego-centre (*Jeeva*) as soon as it leaves one embodiment immediately comes to manifest itself in a conducive atmosphere where it can continue its pilgrimage without any obstruction. It being an aspiring heart, it should necessarily come to be "*born only in a family of wise men of meditation*".

This theory gives a lot of insight into the present-day fallacy which gives such an exaggerated importance to the unhealthy environments and makes everyone protest against their surroundings. No doubt, man is a creature of his environments ; but the same when viewed through the glasses of philosophy gives also an insight into the fact that the individuals in their own freedom had ordered in the past their own present environments. By merely changing his environments, the individual concerned cannot progress ; a habitual drunkard may still continue drinking on the sly, even if he were to be brought into a dry-city, to live among teetotallers.

Examples like Sankara, Christ, Buddha, and other great masters can be considered as supporting this philosophical theory. Such men of brilliant genius who, from their very early youth exhibit super-human knowledge and Godly wisdom, are, no doubt, rare. Krishna himself accepts here that such persons are "*very rare to obtain in this world*". If the previous stanza explained re-birth of an ego (*Jeeva*) after an interval of existence in the heavens, this stanza explains the lives of the few,

who, soon after departing from one embodiment, immediately arrive at this world to continue their Pilgrimage to Perfection.

After reaching such conducive and helpful environments, will the fallen Yogi of the last life continue his spiritual life? Listen :

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन । ४३ ।

43. *tatra tam buddhisamyogam
labhate paurvadehikam
yatate ca tato bhuyah
samsiddhau kurunandana*

तत्र - There, तम् - that, बुद्धिसंयोगम् - Union with knowledge, लभते - obtains, पौर्वदेहिकम् - acquired in his former body, यतते - strives, च - and, ततः - than that, भूयः - more, संसिद्धौ - for perfection, कुरुनन्दन - O son of the Kurus.

43. There he comes to be united with the knowledge acquired in his former body and strives more than before for Perfection, O son of the Kurus.

It may be feared, that an individual who has thus born again will have to start his studies and practices all over again. To remove any such doubt, Krishna here explains that such an individual, in his new life, under the conducive circumstances, gets naturally “*united with the intelligence acquired in his former body*”. Such a born Yogi completes his education much more easily than others, since, to him, it is not an education that is needed,

but only a revision or a re-capitulation. In a very short time, he discovers that all knowledge is bubbling up from within himself and to him study is but a re-discovery of a digested knowledge which was already lying dormant in him.

Not only that he comes to discover in himself the knowledge that he learnt in the past, but he easily finds in himself the required enthusiasm and energy for consistent self-application and vigorous pursuit. Knowledge without practice is a dull, dreary load upon the shoulders of a seeker. Krishna here assures that one “*fallen from Yoga*” in the past, when he is reborn in the right atmosphere, not only does he gain all knowledge easily, but he comes to “*strive more than before, for perfection, O Son of the Kurus*”.

Here again, Arjuna is addressed by such a loving term, which particularly makes him remember that he himself has been born in the noble family of the *Kurus* as a result of his own meritorious past. Perhaps, the Lord himself had to declare the Geeta directly to Arjuna, because the past in his divine actions demanded such an experience.¹

How can one get “united with the intelligence acquired in his former embodiment?” Listen :

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४ ॥

44. *purvabhyasena tenai va
hriyate hy avaso pi sah
jijnasur api yogasya
sabdabrahma tivartate*

¹ It is clear from the Mahabharata that as Nara and Narayana, Arjuna and Krishna had in the past performed severe *Tapas* for a long number of years in the Badrinath peaks.

पूर्वाभ्यासेन - Former practice, तेन - by that, एव - verily, हि्यते - is born, हि - indeed, अयशः - helpless, अपि - even, सः - he, जिज्ञासुः - he who wishes to know Yoga, अपि - even, योगस्य - of Yoga, शब्दब्रह्म - word Brahman, अतिवर्तते - goes beyond.

44. By that very former practice he is borne on in spite of himself Even he who merely wishes to know Yoga goes beyond the *Sabdabrahman*.

At any given moment our bank balance can only be the balance in our own credit and debit statement of accounts. No banker can give us more nor can he cheat us with a less amount. Almost in the same fashion, in the cultural growth of a given mind and intellect no God can either take any or give some, but can only hand over for each one of us our own exact balance. Each life has a logical continuity with its own past, as strictly as we experience in the day-to-day life that the today is but an extension of the yesterday. With this law of life in the mind, if we were to read the stanza, it becomes quite clear.

An individual who had been in Yoga in his past, will be, "*by that very former practice borne on in spite of himself*". This is true even in our life here. An educated man *in spite of himself* will be carried away in his behaviour and conversation to exhibit his cultivated mental and physical habits. No cultured man can successfully imitate the idiot for a long time ; so too, no rascal can with profit act the part of the noble for any length of time. Both will, sooner or later, be compelled, *in spite of themselves*, to exhibit unconsciously their true nature through their words, ideas and actions.

Similarly, a man who had in the past lived the life of self-control, study, and practice gathers unto himself

those cultural traits, and he, in this life, '*in spite of himself*' and in spite of all his adverse circumstances, environments and conditions of life, cannot but instinctively come to exhibit—in his attitudes to life, and in his behaviour to the things and beings of the world—a tranquillity and balance, which in most cases is a surprise even to himself.

This is no mere theory. The truth of the statement is amply evident everywhere in any society, in all strata of its life, in all professions and in all departments of its activities. Each one of us has an instinctive bent of mind and we are irresistibly drawn towards it, *in spite of ourselves*. This pull is most powerful when they are essentially the evolutionary tendencies. Even a bandit chieftain can overnight turn himself to be a determined seeker and ere long become the first great poet of the land, as Valmiki did in the past. Hundreds of such examples can be noted in our recent history, and even amidst us today. In all those cases, the only satisfactory explanation will be that the individual mind-and-intellect is expressing through its given physical structure its own characteristic tendencies, which it had acquired by itself in its past incarnations through its own wilful actions performed and deliberate motives entertained.

An individual who was a fallen Yogi in the past, when he is reborn, "*in spite of himself*" he is drawn towards a life of meditation and quietude, a life of seeking and striving, a life of self-control and discipline. May he be put on the throne of a kingdom, or in the bustle of a market-place or in the ignominy of the gutters, he cannot but express his nobility of heart and the philosophical bent of his mind. All the wealth of the world commanded, unquestioned might and power gained, love or respect given, cannot persuade him away from his Path Divine. And, if the whole world stands surprised at his peculiar tendencies, we cannot at any time say that

he is not himself one of those who is gazing on with the wildest surprise and the utter-most amazement!!
"By that previous practice alone is he borne on in spite of himself".

After observing this philosophical truth, Lord Krishna is naturally tempted to express the glory of meditation (yoga). He says *"one who has even the desire to know control (yoga), he passes beyond the Vedic ritual"*. According to Sankara the term *"Sabda-brahmam"* used here denotes *"the words in the Veda"*, wherein, the term *Veda* denotes only the ritualistic portion. Therefore the *Acharya*, commenting upon this portion says that such an individual goes beyond all the charms for the promised fruits of the Vedic rituals. This may be considered, rightly, as a commentary, rather too laboured, although its implications are indeed only too true. One who has warped his mind in the practice of self-control, study, and meditation in the past could not have any more fascination for the material wealth or the sensuous life, however celestial they may be. Even if this interpretation has thus a bearing to the context, we must admit that the term has been laboured by the Teacher of the *Advaita*-philosophy.

In the tradition of the Upanishads, *Sabdabrahmam*, is expounded as the sacred mantra OM.¹ This interpretation seems to fall in line with the traditional Hindu scriptures. In short, in the context of the discourses,² the Lord wants to glorify the Path of Meditation more than the Path of Action and Worship and, therefore, says herein, *"even the enquirer in the Path of Meditation goes beyond the finite fruits of worshipping OM, the Sabdabrahmam"*.

¹ Maitri Upanishad, VI-22, "passing beyond this, men disappear in the Supreme, the soundless, unmanifest Brahman".

² The Discourse of Krishna in Chapter VI, called Yoga of Meditation.

“How is the Path of Meditation nobler than all others” ? Listen :

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ ४५ ॥

45. *prayatnad yatamanas tu*
yogi samsuddhakilbīṣah
anekajanmasamsiddhas
tato yati param gatim

प्रयत्नात् - With assiduity, यतमानः - striving, तु - but, योगी - the Yogi, संशुद्धकिल्बिषः - purified from sins, अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धः - perfected through many births, ततः - then, याति - reaches, पराम् - the highest, गतिम् - path.

45. But the Yogi, who strives with assiduity, purified from sins and perfected (gradually) through many births, then attains the highest goal.

As we have been noticing till now the mind-and-intellect of an individual functions through its body in the world outside as per the traits chalked out upon it by its past actions performed in its earlier lives. These channels of thinking, dug along the fields of the mind, determine the direction of its thoughts and the texture of its actions in the present. These lacerations on the subtle body are called in Vedānta as ‘sins’, or as the ‘dirt of the within’. These impurities are removed and the existing ulcers healed through selfless action.¹

But even then while reclaiming the wrong negative tendencies of the mind, the individual will have to plough

¹ Refer General Introduction.

the fields of his mind with new patterns representing the constructive divine tendencies. These meritorious Vasanas (*Punya*) also can provide for a man of meditation severe obstructions. After having purified his mind of its unethical and sensuous tendencies, the aspirant practises meditation, and during the still moments of the peaceful peace in the depth of his depths when he exposes his mind to the thrilled atmosphere of its vibrant silence, the noble traits also get completely wiped off. A mind thus rendered completely impressionless (*Vasana-less*) is the end of the mind, since, mind is nothing but a bundle of *Vasanas*. Where the mind has ended, there the Ego has also ended having, "*then reached the highest goal*" or its Self re-discovery.

The explanation of this theory may not perhaps be in print more than half a page, but in actually carving it out into our individual life, it may be the programme of very many lives' consistent practice. "*Through many births*" is a phrase often used by the honest Scientists of Life, the Rishis, in the Upanishads; and they are perfectly right; for, the evolution, as we all know, is not a drama of an afternoon, but it is slowly revealing history of progress through endless aeons.

Unfortunately the clumsy Pundit-class in our recent times have learnt to misuse such phrases—especially after the '*Pauranic-era*' and the '*Chaitanya-age*'—in our sacred Bible to frighten away the Hindus from the sacred Hindu-fold. According to the ill-read priests '*the many births*' are to be counted from the *present existence*; and their opinion would have been certainly acceptable if we, at present, are all but members of the vegetable-kingdom or mere uni-cellular non-entities. Even when he can read the scriptures, with the intelligence and commonsense of an average human-being, if a Pundit were to accept himself to be but a worm, surely he must accept his theory—of course, as applicable only to him.

But, we, with our intellects so fully developed, our minds so energetic and vigorous, our understanding so acute and sharp, we cannot but feel confident that we have exhausted almost all the number of births that are indicated in the term "*through many births*".

To one who has got the temperament to seek Life, the anxiety to realise the Perfection, the vigilance to understand the hollowness of the sense-life, the daring to follow the narrow foot-prints of the Seers of the world, the appetite for Infinite peace and tranquillity, the courage to live the moral and the ethical values, the bravery to barter ones all to achieve the highest,... such a one is not a mineral man, not a vegetable specimen, not a member of the cattle-world, but he is the noblest creation under the Sun, standing right in front of the Doors of Truth, demanding his admission into the *Sanctum Sanctorum* !

Right now, in this very life, is our last birth, if we have a taste to meditate, an urge to seek, a daring to live the Life Divine.

There can be nothing to sound as original in this interpretation to all diligent students of the Geeta. A sacred text-book that had been roaring, time and again, in an irrepressable spirit of optimism, the message of hope and cheer, with no threats of hell and brimstone anywhere in it, cannot be considered to have changed its music all of a sudden to declare that man has hopes of a salvation only after "*many births*" and not "*now and here*". Even though this misinterpretation may be perhaps helpful to the saboteurs of our religion, no intelligent student of the Geeta can ever for a moment be hoodwinked by such false notes.

" Therefore "

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपिमतोऽधिकः ।
 कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ ४६ ॥

46. *tapasvibhyo dhiko yogi*
jñanibhyo pi mato dhikah
karmibhyas ca dhiko yogi
tasmad yogi bhava rjuna

तपस्विभ्यः - Than ascetics, अधिकः - superior,
 योगी - the Yogi, ज्ञानिभ्यः - than the wise, अपि -
 even, मतः - thought, अधिकः - superior, कर्मिभ्यः -
 than the men of action, च - and, अधिकः - superior,
 योगी - the Yogi, तस्मात् - therefore, योगी - a Yogi,
 भव - be, अर्जुन - O Arjuna.

46. The Yogi is thought to be superior to the ascetics,
 and even superior to men of Knowledge (mere
 studies) ; he is also superior to men of action ;
 therefore, (you strive to) be a Yogi, O Arjuna.

In order to bring out the importance of meditation
 among the various practices in the Science of Spiritual
 development, Lord Krishna is making here a truly
 tabulated list of the various types of seekers indicating
 the greatest of the whole lot. More than those who
 practise thoughtless and dull-witted physical self-denials
 (*Tapaswims*) the mediator is nobler.

More than those who vigorously read the scriptures
 and try to learn and remember their declarations
 (Gyanis) is the Yogi (Meditator) nobler.

There are others who strive towards the same bright
 Peak of Perfection treading along the path of selfless work

(*Karmis*) undertaken in the world outside in a spirit of Yagna¹ and who perform worship (*Upasana*) in a spirit of selfless dedication. These ritualists, both in the secular and in the sacred fields of activities, believe that they can reach the Infinite Bliss through these very activities.

Krishna here concludes that a silent and quiet meditator who struggles hard to withdraw himself from his own false identifications with his body, mind and intellect, through constant and consistent contemplation upon the nature of the Self, is ever the best.

Thus, comparing a meditator with a man of utter self-denials, deep students of the scriptures and with ritualists, Krishna concludes his observation that a meditator alone is the best among the whole lot, standing nearest to Truth and, "therefore, you be a Yogi (*Meditator*), O Arjuna".

There are different types of meditators, each meditating upon a different point of contemplation. Who among them is then the best and the greatest meditator? Listen

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्भक्तेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ ४७ ॥

47. *yoginam api sarvesam*
madgatena ntaratmana
sraddhavan bhajate yo mam
sa me yuktatamo matah

¹ योगिनाम् - Of Yogis, अपि - even, सर्वेषाम् - of all, मद्भक्तेन - merged in Me, अन्तरात्मना - with inner

¹ Refer Chapter IV-24 to 30.

Self, **श्रद्धावान्** - endued with faith, **भजते** - worships,
यः - who, **माम्** - me, **सः** - he, **मे** - by Me, **युक्ततमः** -
 most devout, **मतः** - is deemed.

47. And among all Yogis, he who, full of faith, with
 his inner-self merged in Me, worships Me, he
 is, according to Me, the most devout ;

If the previous stanza gives us a relative estimate of the different paths in spirituality, and finally declares that meditation is the best among the lot, the stanza under review, explains who exactly is the best among all the meditators. Meditation is, in the beginning at least, a deliberate act by which the seeker strives to keep his thoughts channelised into one pre-determined line of thinking ; and this is maintained by disallowing the mind running into dissimilar thought-channels. Meditation, therefore, must of necessity start with an effort on the part of the meditator to fix his mind upon some object of contemplation or other.* According to the nature of the object of contemplation chosen, and according to the nature of the persuasions adopted in curtailing the mind from its mad roamings, the Art of Meditation can be classified under different types.

Thus, we have in the tradition of our practices, meditations prescribed upon a symbol, on a God-principle with a form, on the teacher, on the *Kundilini*, on any of the Great Elements, or on a chosen text in the scripture. Accordingly, the practitioners may be considered as followers of different kinds of meditation. The Singer of the Geeta is trying to indicate herein who exactly is to be considered as the best and the most successful meditator among the above mentioned types.

* Refer Swamiji's "Meditation and Life".

In this concluding stanza of the chapter, the Lord insists, that of all the meditators, he, who *with his inner-self (Mind-and-intellect) merged in the Self, and with Sraddha devotes himself to the Self*, is the most firm and steadfast meditator. The pregnant suggestions contained in this stanza can fill volumes inasmuch as it is a summary of the entire *Yoga Sastra*. Naturally, therefore, Lord Krishna dedicates the entire length of the next chapter as an annotation to this mantra-like stanza.

For the purposes of our understanding this chapter, it is sufficient, for the time-being, if we gather from this stanza, that the essence of meditation is not so much in our attempts at integrating the mind, as in the ultimate merging of the inner equipment (*Anthahkarana*) and getting it completely sublimiated in the final experience of the Self. And, it can be done only by one who does proper *Bhajan* upon the Self with all *Sraddha* is the truth-declaration made with a loving insistence here by the Eternal Lover of the Gopinis.

The term *Bhajan* has come to gather upon itself a lot of adventitious superstitions, that the word, as it is understood today, means elaborate rituals, which, almost always, mean nothing to the priest nor to the devoted who are the onlookers of it. Sometimes it means a lot of singing with accompaniments and an entire crowd roaring their way towards an emotional ecstasy, often ending in hysteria and exhaustion, and very rarely they gain even a vague experience of the spiritual thrill. In the Vedantic text books, *Bhajan* is the attempt of the Ego to pour out itself in an act of devoted dedication towards the Principle of Reality whereby it successfully invokes the experience that lies beyond the noisy shores of the mind-intellect. One who does this invocation (*Bhajan*) of the Self, and naturally, gets himself merged in that awakening, is declared here by the teacher in the Geeta as belonging to the highest type of meditation.

It is quite self-evident to every student of Vedanta that such a meditator, comes to transcend all his identifications with the false matter envelopments, and becomes, through the experience of his Real Nature, the very Self. Yet, the mouth-piece of renaissant Hinduism, Lord Krishna, in his modesty and reverence for the tradition in our culture, attributes his statement to his own personal opinion in this stanza.

ओं तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ध्यानयोगो नाम
षष्ठोऽध्यायः ॥

*ity srīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu
brahmavidyayam yogasāstre
śrī kṛṣṇarjūnasamvadae
Dhyanayogo nama
sasto dhyayah*

Thus, in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad-geeta, in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture of Yoga, in the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the sixth discourse ends entitled :

THE YOGA OF MEDITATION

Nowhere else in the entire extent of the voluminous spiritual literature that we have in the *Upanishads*, the *Brahmasutra*, and the *Geeta (Prasthanā Traya)*, can we find such a wealth of details explaining not only the technique of meditation but also the possible pitfalls and how to avoid them successfully, as we have them so clearly and vividly explained here. No scripture fails to hint at the Path of Meditation as truly the way to reach the

highest possibilities in life, and yet, nowhere have we, among our reported and compiled heritage of sacred books, such a vivid discussion of the entire path. To a true seeker, indeed, a thorough study of the sixth chapter is ample direction and guidance to reach the highest through Meditation. It is therefore but proper that this chapter is put under the title : “*The Yoga of Meditation.*”

For other portions of the *Sankalpa Vakya*, refer the same terms explained at the close of Chapters I and II.

CHAPTER VII

The eighteen Chapters of Geeta in the arrangement of its ideas fall into three sets of six chapters each. This is the conclusion arrived at by many Geeta students. According to them, Geeta, being a book which re-interprets the very essence of the Vedic Law, in the entire scheme of its discussions, the song expresses the Truth of the Mahavakya "*That Thou Art*."

Mahavakyas are four in number—each taken from each of the four Vedas and they form four definite pointers all indicating the one and the same sacred Truth, which the Vedas unanimously declare. Of them "*That Thou Art*" (*Tat Twam Asi*) is called the 'instruction message' (*Upadesa Vakya*). This crisp sentence summarises the entire Vedic Law and its philosophy, and, therefore, voluminous commentaries are necessary to elucidate the true significances of each of these three short words.

According to some reviewers of the Geeta, the first section of the Divine Song comprising the opening six chapters explains the significance of the term "Thou" (*Twam*) in this Mahavakya. The second section opening with the Seventh Chapter and concluding with the 12th, explains the term 'That' (*Tat*) in the same declaration. From this chapter onwards therefore, we will be gaining a true glimpse of the goal of the spiritual science as indicated by the Hindu cultural tradition. The last six chapters naturally express the meaning of the term "Art" (*Asi*) and explains the identity of That-essence and Thou-significance.

This division of the great textbook does not necessarily mean that there is a divorce between the earlier section

constituted by the first six chapters and the subsequent sections. There is a criticism against the Geeta that it is a haphazard compilation of the important and attractive stanzas that were available at the time of its compilation, rather hastily done by perhaps, more than one editor. This is generally voiced by those who have made only a superficial study of this Divine Song. Given enough thought, and when we sincerely try to follow the trend of this spiritual discussion between the Master and the student we can easily understand the intimate relationship which exists not only between the stanzas, but also in the logical development of thoughts from chapter to chapter.

The previous chapter not only gave the technique of self-realisation through the methods of concentration and meditation but it concluded with Krishna's own personal opinion upon who exactly was the noblest among the different seekers pursuing the different paths. According to the Lord of Brindaban, a meditator who tries to concentrate his mind upon the Self is superior to those who strive to deny all sense enjoyment to this body (*Tapaswi*) or to those who make deep and learned investigations into the scriptural literature (*Gyani*) or to those who have dedicated themselves to selfless service of the society (*Karmi*). The Flute-Bearer had again tried to express his opinion as to who exactly among the meditators is the most noble. It was declared in the concluding stanza of the previous chapter that of all the meditators the one who has successfully merged his mind in the nature of the Pure Consciousness through the path of single-pointed meditation is the highest and the dearest.

Naturally it should be a possible doubt in the mind of Arjuna as to how a limited and mortal mind-and-intellect of a finite creature could ever embrace and comprehend the entire limitless Infinite. In order to remove this doubt Krishna opens this particular chapter now

under our pen with a promise that he will explain to Arjuna the entire science both in its theoretical and speculative aspects, and clear all his possible doubts on the subject. Indeed for exhaustiveness in treatment and thoroughness in exposition there is, perhaps, no other religious textbook that can stand favourable comparison with Geeta. In this sense of the term we should not only appreciate the Geeta as a textbook of our philosophy, but it is a literary masterpiece of beauty and erudition in the world's literature.

ओं श्री परमात्मने नमः

॥ अथ सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।

असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ १ ॥

SRIBHAGAVAN UVACA

1. mayy asaktamanah partha
yogam yunjan madasrayah
asamsayam samagram mam
yatha jnasyasi tac chrnu

मयि - On me, आसक्तमनाः - with mind intent,
पार्थ - O Partha, योगम् - Yoga, युञ्जन् - practising,
मदाश्रयः - taking refuge in Me, असंशयं - without
doubt, समग्रम् - wholly, माम् - Me, यथा - how,
ज्ञास्यसि - shalt know, तत् - that, शृणु - hear.

The Blessed Lord said :

1. With the mind intent on Me, O Partha,
practising Yoga and taking refuge in Me,
how thou shalt without doubt know Me
fully, that do thou hear.

It should be, naturally, the doubt of all seekers, especially before they enter the seat of meditation, that it is impossible for a limited mind to understand or embrace the unlimited. This doubt can come only to such seekers who try only for intellectual appreciation of the philosophy of the Vedanta. But strangely enough all seekers in Vedanta should be by necessity in the beginning mere scholarly students of the literature. This is an unavoidable stage in the Path of Knowledge. The Science of Vedanta exhaustively deals with this problem and tries to explain how the mind when made to meditate upon the Infinite comes to transcend its own limitations and come to experience the Infinite.

Here Krishna introducing the theme to be dealt with in the next six chapters guarantees Arjuna that he will explain the entire science and technique which will clearly show how a meditator, by fixing his integrated mind upon the contemplation of the nature of the Self, shall come to experience the Divine. From this chapter onwards the term 'mind' is to be understood not as a debilitated and disintegrated mind, but as an integrated mind properly tutored to walk, implicitly obeying the will of the discriminative intellect. When such a mind is firmly established in full concentration upon the divine nature of the Godly potentialities in the mind the seeker evolves double quick. The logic of this inward development, it is promised, would be the theme of this section.

"Now listen to what I am going to say as to how you also, thus acting, will, without doubt know Me in

full, possessed of Infinite greatness, strength, grace and other attributes.”

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।

यज्ज्ञात्वानेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

2. *jnanam te ham savijnanam*
idam vaksyamy asesatah
yaj jnatva ne ha bhuyo nya
jnatavyam avasisyate

ज्ञानम् - Indirect knowledge of Sastras, ते - to thee, अहम् - I, सविज्ञानम् - combined with realisation (direct knowledge of Atma through experience), इदम् - this, वक्ष्यामि - will declare, अशेषतः - in full, यतः - which, ज्ञात्वा - having known, न - not, इह - here, भूयः - more, अन्यत् - anything else, ज्ञातव्यम् - what ought to be known, अवशिष्यते - remains.

2. I shall declare to thee in full this knowledge combined with realisation, which being known, nothing more here remains to be known.

As an introduction to this section constituted of the following six Chapters Krishna promises that he will be delivering hereunder the entire Hindu Philosophy, both the speculative and the practical, in such an exhaustive fashion that nothing more shall remain to be added which is worth knowing. It is always the practice in preserving all patent secrets that the owner of the secret only gives out either the theoretical explanation, or, if at all he gives the details of the practical application of the theory, he

invariably keeps some secret unto himself, so that he may still have the monopoly of the right knowledge in all its entirety.

A modern example of the above can be found in the explanation of the atom secrets. They no doubt give us some theoretical explanation of the nuclear science, the constitution of the energy-particles in an atom, and even openly give out the mathematical calculations of the enormous amount of energy contained in each atom. But, except for the rudimentary principles of the construction of the Atom Bomb, they do not give the complete secret to all. Similarly, here it will be doubted that the technique and science of perfection may not be exhaustively and completely given out by the Lord in the Geeta, as vividly as in the Upanishads. This doubt becomes quite justified because the Geeta comes in the midst of the great classic of the world, the Mahabharata. Here, Krishna endorses and guarantees that the Geeta is a total and exhaustive summary of the philosophy of the Upanishads and though it reads as simple and elementary, in its import and deeper significances the Divine Song exhausts the entire Knowledge.

According to Sankara speculative knowledge is *Gyana* and actual experience of the perfection is *Vigyanana*. Here Krishna is promising that he shall deliver to Arjuna not only the theoretical explanations of the Art of Divine Life but shall, during the very discourse, take him to the highest peak of Self-rediscovery. This may look rather unbelievable. Unlike in *Yoga* and other methods of philosophies in India, Vedanta is not an indirect process, inasmuch as, after the study of the *Sastra*, it is not necessary for a fit student to retire into the jungles to practise and bring the experience of perfection into his cognition.

During the very discourse, if the student is mentally fit to walk along with the teacher step by step and follow

carefully the logic and significance of his explanations, he can gain glimpses of realisation during the very hours of his study. It is because of this that Vedanta is taught only to a student who has been made fit for this flight to the beyond. If inwardly an individual student is perfectly integrated and if the student can maintain continuously his adventurous thirst to experience the Reality, that student in his attempt to identify himself with the thought in and the spirit of his teacher's discourses, can ultimately come to revel in the experience of the very goal that is indicated by Vedanta. Self-realisation is instantaneous during the understanding of the scripture, gained through the teacher-taught discussion.

If Vedanta is thus a complete Science and the experience of the Divinity of the Self can be had even during the very teacher-taught discussions how is it that self-realised masters are so rare in the world? Listen :— (VII-2).

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ ३ ॥

3. manusyanam sahasresu
kascid yatati siddhaye
yatatam api siddhanam
kascin mam veti tattvatah

मनुष्याणाम् - Of men, सहस्रेषु - among thousands, कश्चित् - some one, यतति - strives, सिद्धये - for perfection, यतताम् - of the striving ones, अपि - even, सिद्धानां - of the successful ones, कश्चित् - some one, माम् - Me, वेत्ति - knows, तत्त्वतः - in essence.

3. Among thousands of men, one perchance strives, for perfection ; even among those successful strivers, only one perchance knows Me in essence.

Hearing this seemingly outrageous statement from Krishna that Vedanta or self-realisation is as easy as listening to a short-story reading, Arjuna got confused, because, this assertion of the Lord jarred against his tutored ideas regarding the Hindu theory of Self-perfection. Naturally his eyes as it were bulge out expressing his bewilderment. Krishna has, therefore, to explain why in spite of the fact that Self-realisation is so simple and easy it is not within the experience of everyone. This stanza explains why the majority still choose to remain in the arena of ignorance to weep and to sigh, and are not able to walk into the lit-up arena of Perfect Knowledge and inward equanimity.

The idea that Vedantic realisation and knowledge can come to the experience of only a rare few has been repeatedly emphasized in different portions of the spiritual literature in India by different Masters in different expressions. We are told how the very theoretical side of Vedanta is heard and understood as a marvel.* In the Upanishads also the same idea has been very clearly expressed by the Rishi.**

Here, however, Krishna shifts the entire responsibility for not realising the Self upon the individual seeker himself and attributes it entirely to the Saddhak's own lack of self-application. Vedanta being a subjective science it is not only sufficient that we must know how to eradicate our weaknesses and cultivate our inward strength,

* Please refer *Ibid*, Chapter II—29.

** Please refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad* I—(ii)—7. ..

but we must also live up to those ideals and try to bring about the necessary re-adjustments in ourselves. Very few can discover this necessary urge to evolve in themselves.

Of the thousands that hear intelligently, and perhaps understand all the theory and text of the Vedanta, only a few sincerely apply themselves to live fully the Vedantic way-of-life. Even among a thousand such sincere seekers only a rare few "*come to know Me in My real nature*".

The chances are that even when perfectly explained by a *Sad-Guru* to a student, who is seemingly attending with all enthusiasm, sincerity and concentration, it is possible that he may raise himself up to, perhaps, the very Gate of Truth, but there he himself may come to bar his own entry into the within. Some imperceptible vanity or unsuspected desire is sufficient there, to exile him from himself. In this sense there is a wealth of meaning in Lord Christ's declaration that a camel can pass through the eye of a needle more easily than a rich man through the gates of heaven—the riches are not the 'worldly wealth,' but the individual's mental *Vasana*-wealth. Unless the mind is perfectly naked it has no entry into the Bliss of Truth.

By thus showing the extreme difficulty of attaining Self-realisation, it is not intended here that the students of Vedanta are to feel disappointed and desparate. The stanza should not be read as a pessimistic declaration. Krishna's very character in the entire Mahabarata is as a living embodiment of cheer and laughter, a man of inexhaustible hope and joy. Of all the Godly personalities, in the history of the religious literature of the world, if at all there be one character that has not as much as felt a mental depression, it is the Flute-Bearer of Brindaban. Such a master especially when he is trying to encourage his friend in despondency cannot be considered as offering Arjuna a dose of extra pessimism.

Viewing it in the light of the Krishna-spirit it only means that rare indeed are people who come to study sincerely and get a true glimpse of the Vedanta-literature, and only a very low percentage of them can discover in themselves the necessary mental stamina, the intellectual vision and the physical forbearance to live that life of truth and purity in the world. Since Arjuna and all the students of the Geeta are such rare souls they represent the community of evolvers. To them Krishna promises that He can, through His Divine Song, not only deliver the speculative part of the philosophy of Vedanta but can practically hand over chances to live subjectively vital moments of vivid inward experience of the Self.

“Having prepared the hearer for the teaching by inducing in him a taste for it, the Lord proceeds thus :—

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ४ ॥

4. *bhumir apo nalo vayuh*
kham mano buddhir eva ca
ahamkara iti yam me
bhinna prakrtir astadha

भूमिः - Earth, आपः - water, अनलः - fire, वायुः - air, खम् - ether, मनः - mind, बुद्धिः - intellect, एव - even, च - and, अहङ्कार - egoism, इति - thus, इयम् - this, मे - my, भिन्नाः - divided, प्रकृतिः - nature, अष्टधा - eightfold.

4. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, egoism — thus is my Prakriti divided eightfold.

In an attempt to explain the world outside as a marriage between matter and Spirit great thinkers of the Vedic period had exhausted their philosophical acumen and had given us the Sankhya Philosophy. According to them the Spiritual Factor (*Purusha*) presiding over a given matter envelopment dynamises the inert matter and makes the insentient mineral assembly to act as though it is intelligent and vital. This idea becomes clear to us when we take an example from the Modern world.

With steel and iron the manufacturer completes a steam-engine and when the cold engine is harnessed to steam at high pressure it does work. Steam itself can never express its dynamic capacity and strength ; on the other hand, when it is made to work through a given equipment it is capable of adding movement and motion to the inert iron assemblage.

Similarly, one school of philosophy in India tries to explain scientifically how the Eternal and the Perfect self comes to express itself as a world of plurality in the embrace of matter. This also explains the relationship between Spirit and matter. The technical terms used in the philosophy for these two items are *Prakriti*, for the matter envelopments, and *Purusha* for the Spirit-factor.

Krishna explains in this and the following stanza what all items together constitute the matter-part in us and what exactly constitute the spiritual entity within a living man. Once the individual comes to understand clearly and distinctly the distinction between matter and Spirit indeed he will come to understand that the spirit identifying with matter is the cause for all its sufferings and when it is detached from all its identifications it rediscovers for itself its own essential nature as perfection and bliss Absolute. The spirit identifying with matter and sharing the destinies of the inert equipment is called the Ego. It is the Ego that rediscovers itself to be nothing other than the Spirit that presides over the matter.

In order to make Arjuna realise how exactly one is to understand the true nature of Self in all its divine might and glory, Lord Krishna tries to enumerate the matter-aspect as distinct from the spiritual-truth in each individual

The five Great Elements, Mind, Intellect and Ego constitute, according to Geeta, the eight-fold *Prakṛiti* that has come to be super-imposed upon the Truth through Ignorance. The five Great cosmic Elements are represented in the microcosm in the five sense-organs by which the individual comes to experience and live the world of sense-objects. Thus the list making up the *Prakṛiti* is nothing other than the subtle body and its vehicles of expression constituted of the sense-organs. The sense-organs are the channels through which the world of stimuli reaches within and the inner point of focus of the five sense-organs is called the Mind. The impulses received in the mind are rationally classified and systematised into the knowledge of their reception by the Intellect. At all these three levels of the sense perception, mental reception, and intellectual assimilation, there is a continuous sense of I-ness which is called the Ego. These constitute the equipment through which, at the touch of life, man functions as the intelligent being that he is.

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥ ५ ॥

5. *apare yam itas tv anyam*
prakṛtim viddhi me param
jivabhutaṁ mahabaho
yaye dam dharyate jagat

अपरः - Lower, इयम् - this, इतः - from this, तु -
but, अन्याम् - different, प्रकृतिम् - nature, विद्धि -

know, मे - My, पराम् - higher, जीवभूताम् - the very life-element, महाबाहो - O mighty-armed, यया - by which, इदम् - this, धार्यते - is upheld, जगत् - world.

5. This is the inferior (Prakriti), different from it, know thou, O mighty-armed. My higher Prakriti, the very life-element, by which this world is upheld.

After enumerating in the above stanza the Lower Nature of the Self, Krishna says that it is not all and that the Self possesses besides these equipments a Higher Nature which is constituted of Pure Consciousness or awareness. It is this Spiritual entity that makes it possible for the body, mind and intellect made up of the mere inert minerals to act as if so vitally sentient and intelligent.

The spiritual factor is that entity in contact with which the equipment functions, without which the equipment becomes dull and unintelligent. If consciousness were not in us, we will not be able to experience the world outside or within us. It is this Consciousness that maintains, nourishes, and sustains all the possibilities in us. Without this spiritual spark functioning in us, in our intellect or mind, we would have been no more intelligent or divine than the stone world.

Even in a more material consideration we can logically come to accept the conclusions declared in this stanza. I am standing on the floor of my house ; the house is supported by my piece of land ; the land is protected by the Delhi corporation ; Delhi is supported by India ; India is supported by the World ; the world is supported by water ; the waters of the ocean ; water is held in position by the atmosphere ; the atmosphere is a part of the planetary system. The Universe Stays in space, and this

space rests upon the “concept of space” that is in our mind. Mind gets its support from the Judgment of the intellect. Since the decision of the intellect is known and realised by the Consciousness in us, the spiritual entity is the ultimate support for the entire *Jagat*.

In philosophy the term *Jagat* means not only the world of objects perceived by us through our sense-organs but it includes in its concept, the world experienced through and interpreted by the mind and intellect also. Thus the world-of-objects, the world-of-feelings, and the world-of-ideas that we experience together in its totality constitute *Jagat*. This is supported by Conscious principles with its grace showering upon them all. In this sense also Krishna's declarations are Scientifically true, when He says that the higher *Prakriti*, the Principle of Self-consciousness is that “*by which this entire world of experiences is sustained*”.

How is the Self the Creator, Sustainer and the Dissolver of the world? Listen—(VII—5).

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ६ ॥

6. *etadyonini bhutani*
 sarvani ty upadharaya
 aham krtsnasya jagatah
 prabhavah pralayas tatha

एतद्योनीनि - Those of which these two (*Prakriti*) are the womb, भूतानि - beings, सर्वाणि - all, इति - thus, उपधारय - know, अहम् - I, कृत्स्नस्य - of the whole, जगतः - of the world, प्रभवः - source, प्रलयः - dissolution, तथा - also.

6. Know that these (two Prakritis) are the womb of all beings. So I am the source and dissolution of the whole universe.

The above mentioned Higher and Lower Nature, each functioning in the embrace of the other cause the manifestations of the world of plurality. If Matter were not there, the latent dynamism in the Spirit will not find a field for its expression. The Matter in itself, in its inertness, will not be able to express the similitude of Consciousness unless the Spirit were there to dynamise it. Electricity expressing itself through the filament in the bulb manifests as light. Without the bulb the light in the electricity cannot manifest itself nor can the bulb smile forth in light without the electrical current flowing through it. The bulb is the equipment, functioning through which electricity expresses itself as light. Similarly, the Spirit when it comes to function through the five layers of Matter * discovers for itself a field to express its own potentialities.

Keeping this idea in mind, Lord Krishna declares here that "*these two are the womb of all beings*". It is not very difficult for an intelligent student to realise what it actually means. Not only that the pluralistic world of objects, feelings, and ideas rise from, and stay in it but these will dissolve reaching back again to become the Higher-Nature. Thus, the Lower-Nature is nothing other than the Higher in its essential implications. The Higher, forgetting its own divinity, identifies itself with the Lower and comes to the Ego-centric sorrows and imperfections. The Higher suffers at present, in its own delusions, the sorrows of the Lower. Its own rediscovery of its natural divine glory is the redemption of the Matter. The idea that the Lower has risen from the Higher is similar to the way in which pots of different shapes and colours have

* Please refer Swamiji's Meditation and Life.

all come from the mud. Just as the mud is the truth in all the pots, the Higher is the essential Reality in all the objects of the sense-organs, mind and intellect which the Lower procreates.

“ Therefore— ”

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनंजय ।

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥ ७ ॥

7. *mattah parataram na nyat*

kimcid asti dhananjaya

mayi sarvam idam protam

sutre manigana va

मत्तः - Than Me, परतरम् - higher, न - not, अन्यत् - other, किञ्चित् - anyone, अस्ति - is, धनंजय - O Dhananjaya, मयि - in me, सर्वम् - all, इदम् - this, प्रोतम् - is strung, सूत्रे - on a string, मणिगणाः - clusters of gems, इव - like.

7. There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me, O Dhananjaya. All this is strung on Me, as clusters of gems on a string.

There are two points of view possible of our life, if the above mentioned theory is accepted. From the Lower there is a point of view, and distinctly different from it there is a point of view of life from the Higher also. Just as in the mud there are none of the different shapes and colours of the pots, so too in the pure Consciousness there are none of the worlds of objects, feelings and ideas. “*Besides me there is naught*”. After waking up, to the waker, there is nothing of the dream-world for his re-

cognition. In the endless waves that rise in the ocean there is nothing other than the ocean itself. None of the waves can rise, nor stay, nor can ultimately reach anywhere other than the ocean itself. In short nothing can remain ever totally divorced from its own essential Nature.

If the first line indicates that each one of us has a Lower-Nature which is married to our own Self, still the doubt might come into the minds of the students of the Geeta that the Self in me is different from the Self in all others. This logic of thinking may as a result come to the conclusion that there are as many different Selves as there are different bodies in the world. To show that the Self is one and the same in all the forms it has been said here that the Lord is the common factor in all the forms of the universe. He holds them all intact as a chord holds the pearls in a necklace. These words have deep significance. Not only that it is beautiful in its poetic suggestion but it has also a very exhaustive philosophical indication. The Pearls in the necklace are necessarily uniform and homogeneous and its thread is generally unseen and passes through the geometrical core of every Pearl that holds the big and the small into a harmonious wreath of beauty. Again, the substance with which the Pearls are made is totally different from the constitution that goes to the make up of the thread. Similarly the world is constituted of an infinite variety of names and forms which are all held together by the Spiritual truth into a complete whole. Even in an individual the mind, intellect, body, each different from one another can harmoniously work and unitedly give the music of life for each individual because the same conscious principle works through all these different and varying matter envelopments.

Here is an instance where we see Shri Veda Vyasa typically represented as the poet philosopher of the world. This example is not only poetical but philosophical.

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभासि शशिसूर्ययोः ।
 प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥ ८ ॥

8. *raso ham apsu kaunteya*
prabha smi sasisuryayoh
pranavah sarvavedesu
sabdah khe paurusam nrsu

रसः - Sapidity, अहम् - I, अप्सु - in water,
 कौन्तेय - O Kaunteya (son of Kunti), प्रभा - light,
 असि - am (I), शशिसूर्ययोः - in the moon and the
 sun, प्रणवः - the syllable OM, सर्ववेदेषु - in all the
 Vedas, शब्दः - sound, खे - in ether, पौरुषम् - virility,
 नृषु - in men.

8. I am the sapidity in waters, O son of
 Kunti, I am the light in the moon and
 the sun; I am the syllable OM in all
 the Vedas, sound in ether, and virility
 in men.

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चासि विभावसौ ।
 जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चासि तपस्विषु ॥ ९ ॥

9. *punyo gandhah prthivyam ca*
tejas ca smi vibhavasau
jivanam sarvabhutesu
tapas ca smi tapasvisu

पुण्यः - Sweet, गन्धः - fragrance, पृथिव्याम् - in
 earth, च - and, तेजः - brilliance, च - and, असि -

am (I), विभावसौ - in fire, जीवनम् - life, सर्वभूतेषु - in all beings, तपः - austerity, च - and, अस्मि - am (I), तपस्विषु - in the austere.

9. I am the sweet fragrance in earth and the brilliance in the fire, the life in all beings, and I am austerity in the austere.

How can the Supreme Self be the thread upon which the pearls consisting of the individual plurality are strung together to become the necklace of the harmonious Universe is described in these two stanzas. It has been already said, "*My Higher Prakriti, the Principle of Consciousness*", is the womb of all beings and that "*beyond Me there is naught*". What could be this Eternal Factor which is common in every one and yet not readily perceptible to all is the doubt that has been cleared here.

That which remains in a substance from beginning to the end constantly and ever, without which the thing cannot ever maintain its identity is called its *Dharma*—which is its "law of being". The examples of 'sapidity in water', 'radiance in the sun and the moon', 'Om in all Vedas', 'sound in *Akasa*', 'sweet smell in Earth', 'luminosity in Fire', 'manhood in man', and 'austerity in the austere'—all clearly indicate that the Self is that which gives the individual phenomena its own existence. In short, as the stanza declares, the Self is "*the life in all beings*".

As a more vivid example for grosser intellects the Lord gives the following set of examples :—

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमन्तामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ १० ॥

10. *bijam mam sarvabhutanam
 viddhi partha sanatanam
 buddhir buddhimatam asma
 tejas tejasvinam aham*

बीजम् - Seed, माम् - Me, सर्वभूतानाम् - of all beings, विद्धि - know, पार्थ - O Partha, सनातनम् - eternal, बुद्धिः - intelligence, बुद्धिमताम् - of the intelligent, अस्मि - am (I), तेजः - splendour, तेजस्विनाम् - of the splendid, अहम् - I.

10. Know Me, O Partha, as the eternal seed of all beings ; I am the intelligence of the intelligent ; the splendour of the splendid (things and beings), am I.

Not satisfied with the above enumeration, which can truly indicate their full significances only to those who have a fairly good amount of subtle intelligence, the Lord is compelled to indicate the same Truth through some other more obvious factors. He says in this stanza, "*I am the ancient seed of all beings*". Not satisfied, again, with this statement, as an artist would mix more colours afresh and repeatedly paint, again and again, to bring out his theme more vividly into the perception of the on-lookers, Bhagavan here gives two more beautiful instances by which we can get an insight into the relationship between the gross perceivable Matter and the imperceptible Spirit.

"*I am the intellect of the intelligent.*" The intelligent man constantly expresses a greater amount of divinity in his thoughts and ideas. In that intelligent man, the Self is the intelligence, that subtle Power because of which the individual is capable of bringing out into manifestation an expression of such brilliant intelligence. Similarly,

it is also said that the Self is that which beams out through the beautiful and the energetic.

In other words, it is the Consciousness in us, through the instrument of our intellect, that expresses Itself as an intelligent individual. As a parallel we can say that electricity is 'the light in the bulb'; is 'the heat in the heater'; is 'the music in the radio'.

"Yet another example is given in the following—"

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम् ।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ ११ ॥

11. *balam balavatam ca ham*
kamaragavivarjitam
dharmaviruddho bhutesu
kamo smi bharatarsabha

बलम् - strength, बलवताम् - of the strong, अस्मि - am (I), कामरागविवर्जितम् - devoid of desire and attachment, धर्माविरुद्धः - unopposed to Dharma, भूतेषु - in beings, कामः - desire, अस्मि - am (I), भरतर्षभ - O Lord of the Bharatas.

11. Of the strong, I am the strength—devoid of desire and attachment, and in (all) beings, I am the desire—unopposed to Dharma, O best among the Bharatas.

Having thus served with different examples the seekers of the *average* intelligence * and the *dullest*, **

* Ibid 9.

** Ibid 10.

here in this stanza the Lord is trying to indicate the Eternal Self to the *most intelligent* students, who have the capacity to do subtle reflections upon such philosophical ideologies.

“*I am the strength in the strong*” : This statement is evidently as easy of comprehension as the example given out in the previous stanza. But the statement out-shines the above set of examples when here Krishna gives the phrase qualifying “*Balam*”. Generally an individual expresses his might and strength only when he is goaded by his desires or attachments.

Without these two inner urgencies it is impossible for us to see any expression of might or strength. Desire (*Kama*) and attachment (*Raga*) are generally considered by students of the Vedic literature as almost synonyms ; but Sankara in his commentary has very thoughtfully given us the distinction between these two powerful impulses. He says *Kama* is ‘desire for what is absent’ at present in the scheme of our life, and *Raga* is ‘affection for what one has obtained’. These are the two emotions, lashed up by which individuals or communities, or societies or nations, generally come to explode themselves to express their might and strength (*Balam*). Riots and agitations, battles and wars, are all motivated ever by these two sources. In the subtle definition of the Self, the Lord here brings a new line of thought for the contemplation of the seeker. He says, the Self is not merely the strength in the strong but “*I am the strength devoid of desire and attachment.*”

As though not satisfied with his own definition the Lord gives yet another example. “*I am desire in the beings, unopposed to Dharma*”. We had explained the term Dharma already as the ‘Law of being’. The essential Factor in man is the Divine Consciousness. All actions, thoughts and ideas entertained by him which are

not opposed to the nature of his divine essence constitute his *Dharma*. All actions and thoughts that hasten the evolution of man to rediscover his essential Divine Nature are considered righteous-actions, while all activities of the mind and the intellect that take him away from his true Divine Nature, and make him behave as though he is an animal and degrade him in his evolutionary status, are called unrighteous behaviour

With this understanding of the term *Dharma* the second line of the stanza becomes very clear. “ *All desires that are not unrighteous for the being* ”, means, therefore, the glorious urge in the *evolvers* to meet courageously their own inner weaknesses and bring out a complete consummation of their evolutionary urge to seek and to discover the Goal of Self-perfection and this is the subtle power that is indicated here. The Lord says that I am not the Sadak but I am in him his burning aspiration to discover and become himself one with the immutable Self.

By the above examples does it mean that the Spirit has been really captured and jailed in by the Matter? How can the limited limit the unlimited? Listen :—

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ १२ ॥

12. *ye cai va sattvika bhava*
rajasas tamasas ca ye
matta eve ti tan viddhi
na tv aham tesu te mayi

ये - Whatever, च - and, एव - even, सात्त्विकाः - pure, भावाः - natures, राजसाः - active, तामसाः - inert, च - and, ये - whatever, मत्तः - from Me, एव -

even, इति - thus, तान् - them, विद्धि - know, न - not, तु - indeed, अहम् - I, तेषु - in them, ते - they, मयि - in Me.

12. Whatever beings (and objects) that are pure, active and inert, know them to proceed from Me, yet I am not in them, they are in Me.

In this stanza the Lord concludes the topic of his discussion, which he undertook while commenting upon his own statement, "*all this is strung in me as a row of pearls on a thread*".

The term *Maya*, as used in the Vedantic literature, is nothing other than the different impulses under which the mind and intellect of the living kingdom comes to act. The infinite variety of thoughts and ideas that rise in the hearts of the living kingdom have been observed and classified under the three main moods, governed by which alone do the instruments of feeling, thinking and action come to play their parts everywhere. These three characteristic, eternal moods of the subtle body, are called unactivity (*Sattva*), activity (*Rajas*), and inactivity (*Tamas*) *

With this knowledge of the three *Gunas*, as they are called, when we try to understand the stanza it becomes very easy reading. Whatever states pertaining to these three temperaments of the heart and the head are possible, they all rise from the Self, is a statement which is only a re-interpretation in philosophical terminology, of what have been already explained to us earlier. The Infinite Consciousness is the Supreme Reality, the Spirit, upon which the matter, constituting Its lower-Nature, is but an

* Please refer Swamiji's Discourses on Kenopanishad, Chapter "Rise and Fall of Man".

apparent experience. They all rise from the Truth inasmuch as all the waves rise from the ocean—all mud-pots rise from the mud ; all ornaments made of gold come from gold.

This verse concludes with a beautiful statement which reads like a conundrum. The self-contradiction in such an arresting statement is a deliberate art indulged in by the Hindu philosophical writers. This has the charm that invites an independent intellectual investigation by the student all for himself, upon the declaration, in order that he may come to the sweet secret of its true import and significance. "*Still, I am not in them, they are in me*".

Such a statement would necessarily be false in any situation, because, if A is not in B, the latter cannot be in the former—if 'I am not in them, they *cannot* be in me'. This sweet paradoxical statement clearly indicates that the relationship between the Spirit and matter is not in terms of a cause and its effect, but it is only as a super-imposition of matter upon the Spirit. To the deluded the post can only explain, "the ghost of your vision has risen, no doubt, from me inasmuch as I alone lend to it its existence ; but I, the post, am not in the ghost". So, too, shall the ocean cry, "the waves rise, stay and dissolve in me ; but I am not in the waves".

As Sankara would have it, the Self declares here that even though matter depends entirely for its existence upon the Conscious Principle, yet the Divine Spark is in no way under the thralldom of matter. Matter ekes out its existence from the Spirit ; but, the Spirit—in no way, at no time, even by a fraction—is controlled, contaminated or shackled by the sad lot of the finite imperfect matter.

In the following stanza Lord Krishna regrets that the world is not understanding Him in His pure Nature. "What is this ignorance on the part of the world due to ? Listen—"

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।

मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

13. *tribhir gunamayair bhavair
ebhik sarvam idam jagat
mohitam na bhijanati
mam ebhyah param avyayam*

त्रिभिः - By three, गुणमयैः - composed of Gunas,
भावैः - by natures, एभिः - by these, सर्वम् - all, इदम् -
this, जगत् - world, मोहितम् - deluded, न - not,
जानाति - knows, माम् - Me, एभ्यः - from them, परम् -
higher, अव्ययम् - immutable.

13. Deluded by these natures (states or things)
composed by the three *Gunas* (of *Prakriti*)
all this world knows not Me as distinct from
them, and Immutable.

If there is such a Divine Factor beyond the usual cognition of the ordinary mortals, how does it happen that they are not in a position to understand or realise atleast the presence, if not the complete realisation, of this great Truth? This question is answered here in this verse, “*deluded by the modifications of the three Gunas*” the world of living creatures becomes blind to the divine possibilities in themselves, and live totally in a life of mere identification with the matter envelopments. The post is covered by the ghost-vision for the deluded. It is a fact that so long as the Ghost is viewed not even a por-

tion of the post will be available for the perception of the deluded.

Similarly, identifying with the Maya-products, the Self comes to play the tragic lot of the Ego, and the Ego in its own preoccupations with the outer-world and with its own idle imaginations finds itself incapable of knowing its own true nature. This play of hide-and-seek—ourselves with ourselves in ourselves—is the strange and mysterious play of the ego in universal sorrow and endless mental squalor.

Thus deluded, the Ego does not realise the Supreme, distinctly different from both the lower and the higher *Prakrities*, and experience Its Divine Nature of Immutable glory.

This "Power of Veiling" in everyone of us is defined and described in the following stanza :

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ १४ ॥

14. *daivi hy esa gunamayī*
mama maya duratyaya
mam eva ye prapadyante
mayam etam taranti te

दैवी - Divine, हि - verily, एषा - this, गुणमयी - made of Gunas, मम - my, माया - illusion, दुरत्यया - difficult to cross over, माम् - in me, एव - even, ये - who, प्रपद्यन्ते - take refuge, मायाम् - illusion, एताम् - this, तरन्ति - cross over, ते - they.

14. Verily, this divine illusion of Mine, made up of *Gunās* (caused by the qualities) is difficult to cross over ; those who take refuge in Me alone, come to cross over this illusion.

No doubt Lord Krishna himself admits that it is not easy for any ego-centric individual to transcend this delusion in himself which is caused by "*My Maya*". If a doctor were to come and diagnose a disease and declare that there is no cure for that particular disease, it is not true doctoring, and nobody will have the peace of mind to follow that doctor's prescription and advice faithfully. Similarly, here, if Krishna's diagnosis of the world's sorrows and problems is to be defined by a term "*Maya*" and if the Doctor of the Universe declares that this *Maya* disease is difficult to cure, nobody would faithfully follow such a sad pessimistic philosophy.

Krishna realises these defects and, therefore, immediately removes any such misconceptions in the mind of the students of the *Geeta*. Sometimes a doctor will have to use strong words in describing the illness, to the very patient, in order to bring home to the sufferer the seriousness of his malady ; so, too, Krishna here is only bringing home to us by a direct thrust the seriousness of the mental tragedy into which the Supreme has seemingly fallen, to become the finite mortal ego ! After declaring the seriousness of the disease and the prescription, he hastens to guarantee a complete cure for the malady of man.

"Those who devote themselves to me alone" shall cross over their subjective delusion which has created for man the objective worlds of sorrows and imperfections. How to do this has been already explained while discussing the technique of meditation, in the last chapter. With single-pointed mind to contemplate on the Self is the direct path ; and, in order to walk this narrow-way,

the mind is to be made steady and concentrated through the processes that have already been discussed.¹

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।

माययापहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ १५ ॥

15. *na mam duskrutino mudhah
prapadyante naradhamah
mayaya pahrtajnana
asuram bhavam asritah*

न - Not, माम् - to me, दुष्कृतिनः - evil-doers, मूढाः - the deluded, प्रपद्यन्ते - seek, नराधमाः - the lowest of men, मायया - by Maya, अपहृतज्ञानाः - deprived of knowledge, आसुरम् - belonging to demons, भावम् - nature, आश्रिताः - having taken to.

15. The evil-doers, the deluded, the lowest of men do not seek Me ; they whose discrimination has been destroyed by their own delusions they follow the ways of the demons.

In the last stanza those who can successfully transcend their own subjective delusion have been indicated, and here, naturally, Krishna is trying to give the negative nature in those who cannot overcome this delusion to realise the Divine in themselves. Unless the contrast of ideas are given, the individual student will not be in a position to understand properly what exactly are the tendencies and appetites of the mind that are the true symptoms of the delusions.

“Low men deluded and indulging themselves in evil actions follow the path of the devil (*Asura*) and get

¹ Refer commentary on Geeta VI—14.

themselves deprived of their better discrimination.” We all know that the insignia of the higher evolution in man over the animal kingdom is nothing other than his rational intellect which can discriminate between the good and the bad, the high and the low, the moral and the immoral. This discriminative awareness is the subtle instrument by which individuals are rendered capable of awakening themselves from the dream of their own imperfections to their own essential nature of Absolute Divinity.

This faculty can effectively function only in a bosom that is unagitated by the sense-impulses. The more an individual misunderstands himself to be only a mass of flesh and continuously pants for self-gratification through sense indulgences, the more he is considered as a sinner. Sin, in this sense, is but a devolutionary action which is not appropriate to the dignity and status of the highest evolutionary glory in man. Sin can be perpetrated only by those who have deluded themselves believing that they are only masses of flesh with minds hungry for their emotional satisfactions and intellects trying to assert and express their own ideas. Such people are called by the Geeta here as the deluded (*Moodhah*). The way of life in such deluded men (*Asurabav*) has been most exhaustively described to us by the opposite good qualities of the perfect one, the *Devibhav*, later in Geet.²

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ १६ ॥

16. *caturvidha bhajante mam*
 janah sukr̥tino r̥juna
 arto jijnasur artharthi
 jnani ca bharatarsabha

² Refer Chapter XVI—3.

चतुर्विधा - Four kinds, भजन्ते - worship, माम् - me, जनाः - people, सुकृतिनः - virtuous, अर्जुन - O Arjuna, आतेः - the distressed, जिज्ञासुः - the seeker of knowledge, अर्थार्थी - the seeker of wealth, ज्ञानी - the wise, च - and, भरतर्षभ - O Lord of the Bharatas.

16. Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me, O Arjuna, the distressed, the seeker of (systematised) knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the wise, O Best among the Bharatas.

Since the Self is the source of all existence and energy, all other apparent activities that are seen at the level of matter must all come from the same motive force. Every part of a railway engine is made up of cold iron and if the engine can run forward carrying along with it a train-load of passengers and goods, there must be something other than iron that is giving it the capacity to move. Similarly, the ego-centric deluded men, considering themselves to be their body or mind or intellect, when they act in the world outside, they do come to express a kind of seeming dynamism through their matter vestures. Those who are living in the matter outskirts of the Palace of Truth, when they struggle hard to eke out their satisfaction and happiness fulfilling their desires, they too act invoking their energy from the Spirit.

Even when the deluded ego-centers want to live in their realm of ignorance and sorrows, the need must invoke the required energy and sentience from the Pure Consciousness, the Self. Whether they seek their consolations in their moments of distress, or whether they are mere seekers of satisfaction for the demands of their body, for the urges of their mind for the questions of their intellect, or whether they be mere men of desires striv-

ing hard to fulfil their desires or to satisfy their emotions—they all need the energy to function, the capacity to feel and the ability to act. This dynamic motive power can reach the inert matter and vitalise it only when the Spirit is invoked and contacted.

This invocation of the required type of energy to flow into a particular channel and act therein is called prayer (*Bhajan*). In all true prayers the ego surrenders itself to the Spirit with a demand to its Lord to manifest and function in any given scheme of activity. As an analogy we may take the example of how we make use of an electric plug on the wall. The various equipments such as the fan or the heater or the toaster or the refrigerator—all are in themselves mere iron and steel mechanisms with no capacity of their own to perform work. Only when the electric current is flowing through them can these gadgets serve the society

If I plug into the wall a fan, it is an act wherein the fan is, as it were, invoking the dynamic current to flow through it. If the right instrument is contacted with the current, the individual will be served by that required manifestation. But supposing in winter I switch on the fan, I have no right to complain that the electricity in the house is cruel to me. If unintelligently I invoke the Truth to play through my mind, mal-adjusted with wrong tendencies, the Spirit flowing through such an instrument can bring out nothing but sorrows for myself and disturbances for others.

With this scriptural idea, that the Self has the total monopoly of all sentience and life, Krishna here says that everyone—be he a sinner or a saint, foolish or wise, dull or energetic, coward or courageous—all of them come “to invoke Me (*Bhajan*) and I, expressing myself through their individual mental composition, play out Myself” as those who have the above qualities. Each individual must approach me, be it consciously or unconsciously, ere

he can express himself at his intellectual or at his mental or at his physical personalities.

If everyone must thus invoke the Self in expressing himself or in fulfilling his ideas and emotions, then everyone is "sacred" and "virtuous"—theistic, inasmuch as, all without an exception are devotees at the Temple of the Spirit. Lord Krishna, the Self, now expounds here in this stanza how the numberless persons that reach him with endless prayers, can all be classified under four distinct groups.

(a) When men are distressed, they approach the Life-Energy in themselves, for fighting against and for gaining a total relief from the distress that is threatening them.

(b) Seekers of knowledge and understanding in all fields of activities from mere idle curiosity to the difficult mathematical calculations and subtle philosophical discussions, all of them are ever invoking the grace of the Spirit.

(c) Every one in the living kingdom, throughout their life time, spend themselves irresistibly in one field of activity or other under the whip of their own subjective desires. Fulfilment of desires is the urge under which every member of the living kingdom acts restlessly all through his life time. The inert materials of the body and intellect cannot act unless the Spirit is invoked to play through them and, therefore, the majority are those who reach the Altars of the Spirit demanding satisfaction of one desire or the other.

(d) We have yet a rare few, who approach the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Temple of the Spirit, demanding nothing, expecting nothing, carrying with them as their offerings only themselves. They offer themselves as an oblation in a pure spirit of love-inspired total self-

surrender. The only cry in their heart is that the Spirit should end their sense of separation and accept them back to be embraced by the Lord, and made one with Him. These *Gyanis* constitute the last of the types who try to invoke the Spirit.

Of these four types which is the best?

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

17. *tesam jnani nityayukta*
ekabhaktir visisyate
priyo hi jnanino tyartham
aham sa ca mama priyah

तेषाम् - of them, ज्ञानी - the wise, नित्ययुक्तः - ever-steadfast, एकभक्तिः - whose devotion is to the One, विशिष्यते - excels, प्रियः - dear, हि - verily, ज्ञानिनः - of the wise, अत्यर्थम् - exceedingly, अहम् - I, सः - he, च - and, मम - of Me, प्रियः - dear.

17. Of them the wise, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels ; for, I am exceedingly dear to the wise, and he is dear to Me.

Comprising and contrasting these four above-mentioned groups among themselves the Lord declares here that the *Gyani*, who, with a steadfast mind, surrenders himself to the Self with an integrated devotion, which is not dissipated by other parallel aspirations, represents the best. Single-pointedness of the mind can be gained only when the goal of the meditator is fixed and steady. The aspirations of the seeker, unbroken and all out, to-

reach his own real nature of the Self is called single-pointed devotion (*Eka bhakti*).

This is possible only when one withdraws oneself totally from all other extrovert demands of the lower nature in him. In the case of a Gyani, therefore, the Spirit is invoked not for the acquisition of anything, but for the annihilation of all the self-destructive channels through which his spiritual dynamism gushes out to-day to get wasted on the dry rocks of the world of his hallucination. Naturally, therefore, the Self, as a personification in Krishna, declares in Geeta that the Gyanis are the highest and the best among the living kingdom who reach the Portal of Truth with their individual demands and aspirations.

To the Gyani "*Supremely dear am I.*" Love is measured by the amount of identification the lover has gained with the beloved. Self-surrender is the tune in which the song of love is truly sung. Selflessness is the key in which the duet of love is played. Love demands "giving without expecting any return," at all times, in all circumstances. With this understanding of the nature of true selfless-love, when one tries to understand the attitude of the Gyani towards the Self, it is but true to say that, indeed, a Gyani alone knows how to love so well and so thoroughly.

One-sided love never culminates in any consummation. Man may approach the Spiritual Centre in himself in an attitude of discrimination and surrender—with all his aspiration and love—but if it is not reciprocated by the Spiritual Truth it might become as tragic as the Grecian boy who fell in love with his own reflection. Here, a great psychological Truth has been expounded, when Krishna declares, "*and he is dear to Me.*" It is the Eternal Law of Love that love, with no strings attached to it, can not only order its own fulfilment but shall convert even the base to be noble by its silent persuasions and mysterious charms.

Scientifically viewed it is an observable fact that if a mind is powerfully charged with a certain emotion—may it be sorrow, hatred, jealousy, love or kindness—it can bring about sympathetic vibrations of similar emotions in the chambers of the other hearts that come near it. When one full of hatred approaches us he can influence and fill our hearts to the full with hatred. So too, if we can give the required dose of pure and sincere love, unmotivated by any desire or selfishness, it is a law that even the bitterest enemies, with their hearts full of hatred, can be forced to reflect nothing but love towards us. This psychological truth has been roared out in all its implications, and brought out vividly when the Geeta states that even the Infinite and the Eternal Truth has to helplessly come under the charm of pure and selfless courting of the meditator with *Ekabhakti*.

“Then, the three others, the distressed and the rest, are not dear to Vasudeva? Not so. Then how is it?”

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

18. *udarah sarva evai te*
jnam tv atmai va me matam
asthitah sa hi yuktatma
mam eva nuttamam gatim

उदाराः - Noble, सर्व - all, एव - surely, एते - these, ज्ञानी - the wise, तु - but, आत्मा - Self, एव - very, मे - my, मतम् - opinion, आस्थितः - is established, सः - he, हि - verily, युक्तात्मा - steadfast-minded, माम् - me, एव - verily, अनुत्तमाम् - the supreme, गतिम् - goal.

18. Noble indeed are all these ; but the wise man, I deem, as My very Self ; for, steadfast in mind he is established in Me alone as the Supreme Goal.

With the large-heartedness of a master-mind Lord Krishna here declares that all the living creatures living the life of intelligent seeking and industrious efforts are blessed, inasmuch as they are all in their own way approaching the same fountain of Infinite capacities for tapping out their required energies. Although some are invoking the Eternal spiritual strength for the purposes of reducing their distress or for fulfilling their desires they are all for one reason or the other approaching the Self, and, therefore, relatively they are diviner than the insentient mineral world. However, comparing and contrasting them with the *Gyanis*, Lord says, "*But, the man of Knowledge I regard as my own Self.*"

It is very well-known that there is a lot of difference between one's friendship with the minister and one-self becoming a minister. No doubt to be a friend of a minister is to gain some amount of influence and power in the society ; but, the entire might and glory comes to the man when he himself becomes the minister. Similarly, to be capable of invoking and directing the spiritual strength is certainly divine when it is compared with the inert existence, wherein there is neither the intellectual nor the mental capacities to live a conscious life. A man of Knowledge is one who, courting Truth in a spirit of total identification with it, successfully attains the total transcendence of his individual mind-and-intellect, whereby his ego reaches to rediscover itself to be nothing other than the Self. He becomes one with It.

Such a *Gyani* thereafter ever remains in the divine sense of identification with the Self. This emphasis of extra performance to the status of a man of wisdom, is

only according to Krishna, his personal opinion (*Matam*). This term which is generally translated as religion is not a happy rendering. *Buddha Matam*, *Jaina Matam*, etc., means the opinion of those prophets and seers upon the eternal principles underlying all religions (*Dharma*). These opinions are generally changeables, when conditions and circumstances governing the era and influencing the age change. This subtle difference is generally overlooked in our hasty use of the term. Hindu *Dharma* declares the Eternal Principles upon which all other prophets have given out their comments, from time to time, to bless their respective generations, who lived then the conditions and circumstances available to them in their peculiar ages.

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।

वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥ १९ ॥

19. *bahunam janmanam ante*
jnnavan mam prapadyate
vasudevah sarvam iti
sa mahatma sudurlabhah

बहूनाम् - of many, जन्मनाम् - of births, अन्ते - in the end, ज्ञानवान् - the wise, माम् - to me, प्रपद्यते - approaches, वासुदेवः - Vasudeva, सर्वम् - all, इति - thus, सः - he, महात्मा - the great soul, सुदुर्लभः - (is) very hard to find.

19. At the end of many births the wise man comes to Me, realising that all this is Vasudeva (the innermost Self); such a great soul (*Mahatma*) is very hard to find.

Such pure men of wisdom are necessarily a rare few in the history of the world, is the declaration here, which, in our decadent Hinduism, we have learnt to consider as an extremely pessimistic assertion.³ A little thought should clearly make the fallacy in this wild conclusion quite evident to us. The entire kingdom of man is indeed a very negligible and small proportion of the total sentient creatures in the world. Often in the community of man it is not all that have a fully developed instrument of rational thinking and diviner emotions.

Even among those who have fully developed mental and intellectual capacities it is only a rare few that come to take up seriously the study of the scriptures. All those who study scriptures do not try to live the scriptures but they feel themselves fulfilled in a mere understanding of its contents. It becomes evidently clear that only a rare few can ever come to reach the goal of evolution and come to discover their true divine nature of perfection.

Just as Darwin in our own days, the ancient rishies also have observed that this development can take place only when in the flood of time the different circumstances have rubbed down and polished the imperfect into the shape and beauty of the perfect. It takes almost trillions of years for an organism to evolve from one given form of existence into another higher form of life. Naturally it becomes quite clear that for a rational being of the subtlest potentialities as seen in the man, to scrape off all his ignorance and thereby ultimately reach the Perfect Realm of all Knowledge, it should take an indefinitely long number of lives in different manifestations.

This does not mean that no one among us now, striving so hard as we do at present, has any chance of reaching the goal of life in this very birth. It is not in the

³ Refer Discourse under VI-45.

sense of any pessimistic hopelessness and total despair that this statement is made by the Lord in the Geeta. On the other hand, it is solely for bringing to the recognition of the student the urgency for his faithful pursuit of the higher life. The very fact that a seeker has come to feel a disappointment with his present state of existence, and the fact that he has discovered enough intellectual finish to appreciate and comprehend the subtle thoughts of the Upanishadic lore, clearly show that he has reached the very Arch-way to the Temple of the Self. A little more sincere and steady self-application can take him to the highest state of his evolution.

“Now it will be shown why the people are not generally aware that the Self, or Vasudeva, alone is the all.”

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।

तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥ २० ॥

20. *kamais tais-tair hrtajnanah
prapadyante nyadevatah
tam-tam niyamam asthaya
prakrtya niyatah svaya*

कामैः - By desires, **तैः तैः** - by this or that, **हृतज्ञानाः** - those whose wisdom has been rent away, **प्रपद्यन्ते** - approach, **अन्यदेवताः** - other Gods, **तं तम्** - this or that, **नियमम्** - rite, **आस्थाय** - having followed, **प्रकृत्या** - by nature, **नियताः** - led, **स्वया** - by one's own.

20. Those whose wisdom has been looted away by this or that desire, go to other Gods, following this or that rite, led by their own nature.

Desire—for the sense-objects of the world and for the sense gratification—is the one great cause from which the discriminative potentialities in the human intellect get constantly clouded. In the light of a powerful and strong discrimination, it is impossible that an individual is not conscious of his own Self.

When the discriminative capacities are looted away, those deluded individuals immediately “*engage themselves in some ritualism or other, ordered by their nature, to propitiate one Devata or the other.*” Here the entire stanza comes to yield almost no sense at all, if we follow only the dictionary-meaning of its words, as the translators usually do. I do not mean to say that its world-meaning is incorrect: but, when we read the stanza, not forgetting that the Geeta is a universal scripture, we should expect Lord Krishna to discuss therein a more Universal Truth than a mere given religious faith. And this attitude of our approach to the study of the Geeta is endorsed by Shri Murari himself when he promises in an earlier stanza⁴ that he will be declaring to Arjuna not only the theoretical knowledge of the Vedic declaration (*Gyana*), but also the practical experience (*Vigyana*) of its inner meaning.

Earlier⁵ we were told that the deity for the propitiation of whom we performed the *Yagna* was nothing other than “the productive potential in any given field of activity.” Reading the stanza in the light of this interpretation we may say that the deity mentioned here denotes nothing other than the various joys contained in the different sensuous fields which are courted by us, when we get ourselves lashed by desires, in order that

⁴ Ibid 2.

⁵ Please refer Chapter 3—the description of the ‘Yagna-spirit in which the Lord instructed the Karma Yogin to perform all his actions.

we may gain a complete and an exhaustive satisfaction from them.

Desires are the springs from which thoughts continuously gurggle up to flood the mental zone and disturb the glorious reflection of the Truth in it. When the mind is thus disturbed, the discriminative capacity in the intellect gets dullened and, naturally, that individual is rendered incapable of distinguishing in his understanding the Real from the unreal. When thus, the brilliance of the human intellect has been clouded with the vapours of desire, the owls of negativity and delusory attachments start hooting in the jungles of that mind.

It is not the mere appearance of desires in the mind that causes the fall of man. No individual can resist so easily the compelling charm of the desires rising in his bosom. He soon comes to identify himself with them. The thoughts rising in that individual though directly governed by his desires, when once a given desire has been identified with, the desirer himself unconsciously comes to lend an uncontrollable amount of dynamism to the upsurge of the flooded thoughts.

Thoughts themselves are inert matter, inasmuch as they are the by-products of food, and they are constituted of the subtlest aspect of the food consumed. These inert thought-waves gather a momentum and a force by borrowing their strength and vigour from the Self, through the individual's enthusiastic identification with those desires. The surge of thoughts determines the action. The actor in the field is for the time-being rendered incapable of discriminating whether the action undertaken can or cannot ultimately bring to him a permanent and an enduring satisfaction. Drunk with the idea that he will be able to gain at least a temporary appeasement, the individual struggles hard and strives intensively to invoke and propitiate "*the productive potential of the given fields of his activity*" (Devata).

In thus invoking the *Devata* of a given field, the individual has to strive in a proper and fitting fashion. The methods of assembling the required instruments, the techniques of their applications, the time intervals necessary for maturing the results, and the type of gains accrued from the different kinds of applications all these differ from field to field in the world. Therefore, each one will have to, according to the type of his desires, "*follow this or that rite.*"

Leaving aside all sincere struggles to realise the Self, as "*Vasudeva is these all,*" why should different persons thus struggle hard so differently, is explained here in the second line. Each individual, according to his mental impressions, gathered in his earlier moments of activity and thought, helplessly functions in the different fields of his temporary fascinations. To conceive that 'the Creator is putting ideas into each one of us because of which one is good and another is vile,' is a philosophy of the defeatist, of the impotent, of the sluggard. The true men of action, with the daring of a well-developed intellect, can very easily see through men and their behaviours and come to this bold conclusion that each man acts as per schedule, maintained and ordered by himself during his own past actions.

In short, a deluded entity strives hard, running after the mirage of sensuality, hoping to gain therein a satisfaction that is 'at once Infinite and Immortal, while, yet another is found to have the subtle vision to discriminate and discover for himself the hollowness and futility of the sense-pursuit. This latter type does withdraw itself from all these ultimately unprofitable fields, and with an appetising avidity seeks the Path to the Real.

What then* is the function of the guardian angel in each one of us, the Atman?

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयाचर्तुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ २१ ॥

21. *yo-yo yam-yam tanum bhaktah*
sraddhaya rcitum icchati
tasya-tasya calam sraddham
tam eva vidadhamy aham

यः - who, यः - who, याम् - which, याम् - which,
तनुम् - form, भक्तः - devotee, श्रद्धया - with faith,
अर्चितुम् - to worship, इच्छति - desires, तस्य - of him,
अचलाम् - unflinching, श्रद्धां - faith, ताम् - that, एव -
surely, विदधामि - make, अहम् - I.

21. Whatsoever form any devotee desires to worship
with faith—that (same) faith of his I make
(firm and) unflinching.

No other scriptural text-book existing in the world to-day can be truly called an Universal Scripture, as we can rightly consider the Divine Song of the Lord of Brindavan. Religions, when they are built upon the limited declarations of great prophets, given out by them during their mortal existence in this ever-changing world, they, naturally, have the knack of turning out fanatics. Without blind faith in their Prophets, the Bibles of the world, cannot for a moment hold within their embrace the entire mass of their 'faithful followers'. Love to one Prophet when it is whipped up beyond a certain tempo must encourage an intolerance with every other prophet!

When personalities are worshipped and followed, rather than the ideas preached and the idealisms lived by them, they almost always breed fanatics. Even among the Hindus when they come to worship as devotees of one or the other of the *Pauranic*-Gods, they too split

among themselves into opposing camps of *Vaishnavites* and *Saivites*, and shamelessly fight among themselves as political parties do during their excited days of election campaigns.

Vedanta respects no personalities ; no personality is considered as all-important in Vedanta. It is a text-book, enunciating and proving the Science of Right Living, and as such, the Rishis are but the mouth-pieces that declare the Rishi-experiences. Geeta as a faithful interpreter of the Science of Vedanta, whenever it comes to declare the application of that Science in Life, it immediately rises to the full stature of a Scripture of Man rather than a mere religious text book of the Hindu *Vaishnavites*. The set of stanzas that are now under review, provide us with a set of excellent examples providing the universality of the Divine Song.

In the very opening of this chapter, discriminating the Self from the not-Self, it was shown how the Eternal Krishna is the Spiritual Principle, the common Truth, that holds together the multiple Universe of names and forms.⁶ It was also said⁷ that the three-fold mental temperaments (*Gunas*) that work up the divine illusion, hoodwink the individual from the right cognition of the Divine Self in him. But for the Conscious Principle thrilling the inert matter walls, that seemingly encircle the Spirit, neither the physical nor the mental nor the intellectual personalities can ever come to function as they do in our present level of existence. It is very well known, that all men do not worship at the same altar. Each one approaches the same Truth by worshipping the idol of his own heart. Krishna here declares the sacred truth that in all Churches, Mosques, and Temples, in public places and in private institutions, in the open and in the sly, in the quiet huts and in the silent caves—wherever and whatsoever form any devotee seeks to worship with *Sradha*, “his faith do

⁶ Ibid 7.

⁷ Ibid 14.

I make unwavering." A faithful follower of the Geeta can never be contaminated by sectarianism or intolerance. At the foot of every altar, it is Krishna, the Self, that constantly supplies more and more faith to water the expanding fields of devotion in the sincere devotees.

Applying this general statement to the subjective worship in the human bosom, we can very easily understand the greater imports of this stanza.

In the world outside, it is very well known that the greater the consistency with which an idea or an attachment is maintained by an individual, the greater does he become, fixed up in those temperaments and relationships. The more oftener a particular type of thought is entertained in the mind, the deeper becomes that thought-channel strengthening that very mental impression. These deep-cut patterns of thought, ploughed along the valleys of the mind, indicate the pattern of desires which the individual comes to entertain. In the law that governs this psychological rule, we can spy for and detect the Spiritual Reality and Its infinite and glorious might.

In short, the Lord says that "as we think so we become," and the more we become the more we think in the same given pattern. Applying this principle, of the psychological life of man, it becomes clear beyond all doubts, why everyone of us is bound by our own habits and how we get chained up by our own peculiar type of thinking. The sensuous is not to be condemned, and equally so, the divine need not be congratulated. Both of them are the exact products of their individual types of thinking. Thought belongs to the realm of Nature (*Prakriti*); thoughts create the world; and the All-pervading Self is the essential Substratum (*Purusha*) that provides the world-drama with its stage and scenerio.

With this ever-growing faith how does the man-of-the-world gain his particular desires?

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।

लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान् हि तान् ॥ २२ ॥

22. *sa taya sraddhaya yuktas
tasya radhanam ihate
labhate ca tatah kaman
mayar va vihitan hi tan*

सः - He, तया - with that, श्रद्धया - with faith,
युक्तः - endued, तस्य - of it, आराधनम् - worship,
ईहते - engages in, लभते - obtains, च - and, ततः -
from that, कामान् - desires, मया - by me, एव -
surely, विहितान् - ordained, हि - verily, तान् - those.

22. Endued with that faith, he engages in the
worship of that (*Devata*) and from it he
obtains his desire : all these being ordained,
indeed, by Me (alone).

Imbued with this faith he invokes the *Devata* of his
choice and gains his desires. And, Lord Krishna adds,
that in all cases these desires are “*being verily dispensed
by Me alone.*” The Self is the source of all activities and
gains, fulfilments and despairs. The sense of joy or sorrow,
success or failure, are all the various mental thought-
waves, and but for the Conscious Principle illumining
them we will not be aware of any such experience.

Faithful activity in any given field of action, brings
about, no doubt, complete success, but, the very existence
of the field, the capacity to act, the fervour of faith that
supplies consistency to all efforts—all these are possible
only in the medium of the Changeless, the Actionless,

the Attributeless Self Eternal. And Krishna, identifying himself with this Spiritual Centre of the Universe, rightly declares here, that he alone is the one that supplies an ever growing faith in all activities, and, ultimately, when the laws of action are fulfilled to the last bit, both in their intensity and application, it is he alone who dispenses the exact result for each action.

When a well-adjusted radio is plugged on to the line of current, according to the Station to which the instrument is tuned, the Electric Current says that it alone is the 'dispenser' of the programme available at the Station for the listeners.

"Since the deluded ones desire the finite sense-objects they do not come to the all-satisfying peace, and, hence, it is said :"

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।

देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥ २३ ॥

23. *antavat tu phalam tesam
tad bhavaty alpamedhasam
devan devayajo yanti
madbhakta yanti mam api*

अन्तवत् - Finite, तु - verily, फलम् - the fruit, तेषाम् - of them, तत् - that, भवति - is, अल्पमेधसाम् - those of small intelligence, देवान् - to the Gods, देवयजः - the worshippers of the Devas, यान्ति - go to, मद्भक्ताः - my devotees, यान्ति - go to, माम् - to me, अपि - also.

23. Verily the fruit that accrues to those men of little-intelligence is finite. The worshippers of the Devas go to the Devas, but My devotees come to Me.

The fruits accruing to "*these men of little understanding are limited.*" Fleeting desires for finite objects, even when fulfilled through the impermanent activities, must surely prove themselves to be ephemeral. Out of gold whatever ornament is made, it also must be of gold alone ; when chocolate is made out of sweet things, the resultant stuff cannot be bitter. The effects entirely depend, for their nature and quality, upon those of the causes.

Finite actions undertaken in a finite field, employing finite instruments, cannot but produce, as a result—whether it be joy or sorrow—only a finite fruit. Joy arrested or ended is sorrow ; and, therefore, in each instance of a sensuous desire satisfied, though there is a joy and a fulfilment, soon the sense-of-satisfaction putrefies to provide the sourness of dissatisfaction, or, more often, the very bitterness of sorrow.

This statement of the Lord is supported by the following general rule that, "*the worshippers of the Devas reach the Devas.*" Those who are invoking a desired 'potential profit' in any given field of activity can, even when completely successful, gain only *that* profit.

The above statement is declared as a contrast to a pure philosophical truth, when the Lord says : "*those who devote themselves to Me, come to Me.*" If seekers of happiness in the world of sensuous objects, as a result of their strife and struggle can gain their insignificant success in the fields of sense-enjoyments, if the same effort is applied by them in the right life of constructive living they too can reach to discover their identity with the Eternal Absolute, the Self. Due to the extrovertness

of the deluded Ego, it comes to identify itself with its finite matter envelopments and reveal itself in a world of its respective objects, together called in Sanskrit as the *Jagat*.

Discriminative and careful seekers, understanding the utter uselessness of the pursuit of the finite pleasures, detach themselves from their false ego-centric lives and through the process of meditation upon the Self, as advised in the previous chapter, they come to re-discover their own Real Nature in the sunny fields of Bliss that lie unrolled beyond the thorny by-lanes of the physical; the psychological and the intellectual quests.

In the language of the Geeta the first person singular always, at all places, stands for the Infinite Reality which is the Substratum for the individual as well as for the Whole. Therefore, "*My devotees come to Me*" is not the assertion of a limited historical figure as the son of Devaki, but the Singer of the Geeta, in his divine inspiration, entirely identifies himself with the Principle of Consciousness that is the core of the pluralistic dream of the mind-intellect equipment. Thus, to understand the above statement, without its seeming limitations, is to understand the Geeta, the Scripture of Man, as declaring that the seekers of the Self discover themselves and become the Self

"*Then why do people in general fail to reach the Self?*" Listen :

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।

परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥

24. *avyaktam vyaktim apannam*
manyante mam abuddhayah
param bhavam ajananto
mama vyayam anuttamam

अव्यक्तम् - The unmanifested, व्यक्तिम् - to manifestation, आपन्नम् - come to, मन्यन्ते - think, माम् - Me, अबुद्धयः - the foolish, परम् - the highest, भावम् - nature, अजानन्तः - not knowing, मम - my, अव्ययम् - immutable, अनुत्तमम् - most excellent.

24. The foolish think of Me, the Unmanifest, as having come to manifestation, not knowing My higher, immutable and peerless nature.

Men who lack discrimination and the capacity to perceive the subtle Truth, that shines in and through the vast disturbances of the endless plurality, fail to realise the immutable and the peerless Self, in their extreme preoccupation with the ever-changing glory of the perceivable, the *Prakriti*.¹ They do not understand that “*all this is strung on Me as a row of jewels on a thread.*”²

This fundamental Reality, that is the beam of brilliance in which like dust-particles the Universes dance about, is in fact termed as the “Unmanifest”. This term is to be understood in all its philosophical implications. That is called the *manifest* which is available either for the perceptions of the sense-organs, or for the feelings of the mind, or for the understanding of the intellect. That which is not available for any one of these instruments of cognition, feeling or understanding, is considered as the *unmanifest*.

The Self, indeed, should then be considered as the *unmanifest*, for, it is the Vitality behind the sense-organs, the Feeler-potential in the mind, and the very light that illumines the intellect.³

¹ Ibid 4 and 5.

² Ibid 7.

³ Refer Swamiji's “Discourses on Kenopanishad”.

The distorted intellects of the extroverts, in their miscalculations, come to the false judgment that the physical glory of the Prophet or the Incarnation is all that is the Eternal Truth. The point-of-concentration (*Upasya*) is to be considered, no doubt, as the symbol of Truth which the devotee is seeking, but it cannot be in itself the Truth. If it were the Truth, then after carving out an idol or after approaching a Guru, the devotee has nothing more to do, since he has gained the Truth. Idol worship is only a convenience for the true seekers, so that they may gain, during moments of their devoted concentration, a momentum, for the final flight into themselves to reach the Self and discover their own oneness with It.

Vyasa, as the father of the present form-worship, through his immortal works, the *Puranas*, had perhaps, in his infinite wisdom felt that, in the long run, the intellectually idle devotees, in their mad emotionalism might come to mistake the means for the end. In order to remove this danger, the great Saint is making the Lord himself declare here that "*the foolish regard Me, the Unmanifested, as having come to manifestation.*"

How true it seems,⁴ that the fears of the great Seer have come true in our own days!! If only they would listen to their own Lord, declaring here, himself disowning what they, the ignorant devotees, blindly believe in their utter superstition. It will do them no harm if they remember, at least now and then, that the *Geeta* is not a separate text-book dedicated to some "hard-hearted intellects, living the life of the caves"—as the glorious *Rishis* are being condemned by those who can never understand the Seers of the *Upanishads*. *Geeta*, the Song

⁴ Even when this pen is writing these lines the writer has to resist his pen, for already some wise-looking mis-guided devotees have taken their cudgels against this commentator, to hoot in the dark valleys of their prejudices. ominous threats, that as a Vedantin, he is against idol-worship.

of the Lord, is placed in the Scheme of Mahabaratha almost at its geometrical centre.

This stanza gives us a clear insight into the futility of mistaking the bottle for the medicine, the physical form for the Guru, the idol for the God. All white wooden pieces are not the fragrant sandal-wood. Any bright light high up in the sky, however resplendent it may be, is not the Sun. Because some blind men of incomparable foolishness declare that the light from a tower is the Sun, no wise man of the town can accept it. The idea of Divine Incarnation is accepted in Hinduism, and according to its theory everyone is an incarnation to a degree. The same Truth pervades all and in each, It expresses through Its enveloping layers of the mind-and-intellect. The clearer the mind and the purer the intellect, greater is the effulgence of the Divine that beams out of that given equipment.

The Self in anyone, when It happens to beam out through the steadied and purified, and thus almost completely sublimated lower nature (*Prakṛti*), he becomes a Prophet, a Sage. Krishna, Rama, Christ, Allah, Buddha, Mahabir are some of the examples. These men of Realisation discovering their Self, understood and lived every moment of their lives in the Self, as the Self of all. To mistake the physical structure or the lingering traces of their mind, or the film of their intellectual personality for the very Essence of Truth which these God-men are, is to make as miserable a mistake as to take the waves to be the ocean.

Naturally, therefore, Krishna uses here a severe term for such deluded men of superstitious false understanding as the "*unintelligent fools*".

What causes this prevalent ignorance of the True Nature is explained in the following :

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
 मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥ २५ ॥

25. *na ham prakasah sarvasya
 yogamayasamavrtah
 mudho yam na bhijanati
 loko mam ajam avyayam*

न - Not, अहम् - I, प्रकाशः - manifest, सर्वस्य - of all, योगमायासमावृतः - veiled by Divine Maya, मूढः - deluded, अयम् - this, न - not, अभिजानाति - knows, लोकः - world, माम् - Me, अजम् - unborn, अव्ययम् - imperishable.

25. I am not manifest to all (in My Real Nature) veiled by *Divine-Maya*. This deluded world knows not Me, the Unborn, the Imperishable.

If there be such a glorious Essential Truth Factor, which is the Core everywhere, why is it that it is not freely known and experienced by everyone at all times ? In short, " what stands between me and myself ? " Why is it that we behave as though we are but the limited Ego-centres and that we are not able even to comprehend the idea that in essence we are the Infinite, the Immortal? These questions are unavoidable in the bosom of an intelligent seeker when he, in his aspirations, comes face to face with the staggering revelations contained in Vedanta.

" *This deluded world knows Me not, the Unborn and Immortal,*" because their own " *illusion, born out of the three Gunas veils Me*" from them. *Maya* is the most difficult theme for all early students of Vedanta, when they try to merely understand objectively this Science of Life. The moment a student tries to experiment this

knowledge upon himself subjectively, the obvious explanations contained in the theory become self-evident. *Maya* which is the conditioning, through which, when the Non-dual Truth expresses Itself, the One Reality seems to fan out as the spectrum of the multiple universe.

The principle of *Maya* functioning in the individual is termed ignorance (*Avidya*). This subjective malady, which provides in its wake the dreamy hallucinations of a sorrowful world of change and imperfections, has been very closely observed, and the Rishis of old have declared that it is caused by three types of 'germs' in man's inner personalities. These three temperaments (*gunas*), called *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, provide a prism, viewed through which, the kaleidoscopic world seems to dance parading their infinite patterns. *Rajas* creates mental agitations, (*Vikshepa*), and *Tamas* creates the veiling (*Avarana*).⁵

By the play of these triple temperaments when one becomes confused and confounded, to him the Self is not available for direct experience. Special instructions from teachers, diligent practice on the part of the students are both necessary in order to make one realise one's own Real Nature. To an ignorant man of the jungle, electricity is unmanifest in the bulb and in its efflorescent filament. In order to perceive the electrical current that flows through the equipment, knowledge and experimental confirmation are unavoidable. After having gained the knowledge of the electrical energy and its properties, though the student happens to see the very same bulb, he comes to cognise through the perceived bulb the imperceptible, and therefore, the unmanifest electrical energy.

Similarly, when through self-control, listening, reflection, and meditation, the agitations of the mind are controlled and quietened, and thereby when the veiling has

⁵ Refer Fall & Rise of man—in Swamiji's 'Discourses on Kenopanishad'.

been pulled down, the seeker re-discovers “*Me, the Unborn, the Immutable.*” As long as the agitations of the mind veil the intellect from its awareness of the Self, so long the limited ego, pants to fulfil itself and to gain the Infinite among the gutters of its sensual cravings !!

Such frenzied hearts blotted with desires and lacerated with disappointments, crushed by dissatisfactions and smothered by the fear of its own annihilation—can never have the integrated equipoise to live at least a moment of still-awareness to experience the Pure Consciousness. “*The deluded world knows Me not*” as they are steeped in “*the illusion born out of the three-fold gunas.*” Screened off by this Universe of names and forms, which is but an apparent projection of the Self, the ordinary sense-organs, mind or intellect fail to perceive It. The ghost veils the post; the mirage-waters clothe the desert; the waves screen off the ocean !!

The present condition of ignorance and confusion in the limited finite Ego is brought out very vividly, in the following, by contrasting it against the background of the Self, which is of the Nature of All-Knowledge :

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।

भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥ २६ ॥

26. *veda ham samatitani
vartamanani ca rjuna
bhavisyani ca bhutani
mam tu veda na kascana*

वेद - Know, अहम् - I, समतीतानि - the past,
वर्तमानानि - the present, च - and, अर्जुन - O Arjuna,
भविष्याणि - the future, च - and, भूतानि - beings,

माम् - me, तु - verily, वेद् - knows, न - not, कश्चन - any one.

26. I know, O Arjuna, the beings of the past, the present and the future, but no one knows Me.

The idea that the God is Omniscient, is very familiar to all religions of the world, but a satisfactory explanation of this concept is given only in Vedanta. In Geeta too—as a Bible of the religion, as a hand-book of easy reference for the students of the Upanishads—we find only a mere hint of the Omniscience of the Self.

The Self as the Pure Consciousness is the illuminating principle that brings the entire field of the mind and the intellect under the beam of our clear awareness. Even the world-of-objects is brought within our understanding only when they enter, through the sense-organs, to reach the mental lake and make therein their characteristic thought-waves: the thought-waves make the intellect function in classifying and determining them. Both these mental and intellectual disturbances are illumined for us by the ever wakeful Consciousness, the Self in us.

The Self is the same everywhere. In all bosoms it is the same Conscious Principle that illumine the respective thoughts and ideas of the individual. Naturally, therefore, the Self represents the Awareness that illumines or knows, all thoughts and all ideas in every living organism.

The sun-light illuminates all objects of the world. When my eyes or ears illumine a given form or sound I say that I understand that particular form or sound; in short, to be aware of a thing is to know that thing: and to know is to illumine. Just as the sun can be considered as the "Eye of the world," inasmuch as without the Sun all organs of vision will be blind apertures, so

too the Self can be considered as the knower of everything, in everyone, at all times, and in all places. This Omniscience of the Supreme is vividly hinted at here, when Krishna declares, "*I know the beings of the whole past, of the present and of the future.*"

It must be noted that the Eternal Self is not only the Awareness that lights up all bosoms at this present moment, but it *was* the Awareness that illumined the objects, feelings and thoughts in all bosoms from the beginningless beginning of creation, and it *shall be* the same Principle behind every knower that knows anything in all the future generations till the endless end of time.

Electricity revolves the fan ; but the fan can never fan the electricity ! The gazer surveys the heavens through a telescope, but the telescope can never survey the gazer ! The Conscious Principle vitalises the food-made mind and intellect and makes them capable of feeling and thinking. Without the Self dynamising them, they are incapable of sense-perceptions ; neither the mind nor the intellect can perceive, feel or comprehend the Subjective Principle, the Self. The Lord declares here that though he knows everything, at all times, in all places, he is known by none at any place or at any time — "*But Me none knows*".

According to the strictest Vedantic philosophy, the Self is not a knower, just as in the strictest logic of thought it would be a lie to say that the sun illumines the world. Though from our stand-point, in contrast with the hours of night when things are not illumined, we may rightly attribute the function of illuminating things to the 'principle of light' called the sun. However, from the stand-point of the sun, which is ever brilliant, there is no moment when he is not blessing the objects with his shining touch. Therefore it is as meaningless to say that the sun illumines the objects, as to say that "I am too busy now-a-days breathing !"

The knower-hood is a status that is gained by the Self when it functions through the equipment of *Maya* ; and the Self, that functions in and through the delusory *Maya* ⁶ is called the God-Principle, termed in the Vedantic literature as *Hranyagarbha*. Krishna here is pictured by Vyasa as the divine embodiment of Truth, and Incarnation of the Self, and, therefore, it is perfectly right if he arrogates to himself the nature of omniscience and declares himself as “*the knower of everything, in all the three periods of time.*”

But, unfortunately, an Ego-centric limited mortal, viewing the universe through the pin-hole of his congested, constricted and limited mind-and-intellect, fails to feel the harmonious rhythm in the macrocosm. One who can rip open his own self-made bondages of ignorance and rise to attune himself with the macrocosm can certainly come to experience the Krishna view-point. Anyone who successfully comes to live thus in unison with the cosmic mind, he is the Krishna of that age and for ever, thereafter.

“*If the Self is that which is the Eternal Knower of all conditioned-Knowledge, then what veils this Essential Nature from the realisation of the men ? Listen :*

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।

सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परंतप ॥ २७ ॥

27. *icchadvesasamutthena*

dvandvamohena bharata

sarvabhutani sammoham

sarge yanti paramtapa

⁶ The congress of the three gunas with which Sattwa predominates the maximum—*Sattwaguna-pradhana Mayo-pabha Brahman, Iswarah.*”

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन - Arisen from desire and aversion, द्वन्द्वमोहेन - by the delusion of the pairs-of-opposites, भारत - O Bharata, सर्वभूतानि - all beings, संमोहम् - to delusion, सर्गे - at birth, यान्ति - are subject, परन्तप - O Parantapa.

27. By the delusion of the pairs-of-opposites arising from desire and aversion, O Bharata, all beings are subject to illusion at birth, O Parantapa (scorcher of foes).

A highly scientific and brilliantly subtle philosophical truth has been suggested in this stanza now under review. In his attempt to explain why and how the ego-centric personality in man fails to cognise the all-full nature of his Reality, the Lord touches, by implication, the very fundamentals discovered and discussed by the modern biologists in explaining the evolution of organisms. The instinct of self-preservation is the most powerful urge under which the individualised-ego tries to live its life of continuous change. This instinct of preservation expresses itself in the intellectual zone as binding desires for things that contribute to the continuous welfare and well-being of the individual's existence.

The impulse of desire flowing from a bosom towards an object of attachment, when it gets bumped up half-way upon an object or a being that stands between the bosom that craves and the object-of-craving, the refracted desire-thoughts express themselves as aversion.⁷ In the tug-of-war between these two forces of desire and aversion the hapless ego gets torn asunder and comes to suffer the agonising pain of the lynching tensions. Naturally, its mind-and-intellect becomes fully preoccupied with its pursuits after things of its desire, and with its efforts

⁷ Refer Chapter II, 62 & 63.

at running away from the objects of its aversion. Soon the ego-centric personality becomes endlessly pre-occupied, totally confused, and completely exhausted.

The host of thought-disturbances that are thereby created in the mental and in the intellectual zones breed among themselves and add day by day to the chaos within. This 'agitation' (*Vikshepa*) is that which veils (*Avarana*) the Truth from the direct cognition of the individual. Therefore, the only way by which we can come to re-discover our equipoise and tranquillity, as the Eternal Self, is to arrest, control and win over the agitations of the mind. All spiritual practices in all religions of the world are techniques—either emotional, or intellectual or physical—that bring about at least one solitary moment of perfect mental poise. Such a moment of poise, is the moment of perfect mental illumination, the auspicious hour of re-discovery, the fulfilment of the re-union.

But unfortunately, adds the Lord in a divinely pathetic note, that, "*all beings fall into this delusion at their very birth.*" This is not a pessimistic submission to the sorrowful destiny of man, from which he is from birth incapacitated to escape. Unlike the Christ-religion, our Krishna-religion does not conceive man as a child of sin. The Master of Optimism, the Teacher of Hope, the Joyous Dancer of the Jamuna-banks, is here expressing only a philosophical truth, that the very birth of an individual into a given embodiment, with its available environment, is the exact tragedy that he himself had planned out elaborately for the fulfilment of his own deep cravings and secret desires.

To get out of this delusion and gain the right knowledge is the Sacred Goal of Life, and Geeta is the Song of the Self that enchants the erring souls away from their confusions to the soft fields of the joyous Perfection.

To show then what are the qualifications of those who seek the Truth the following is given :

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥ २८ ॥

28. *yesam tv antagatam papam
jananam punyakarmanam
te dvamdvamohanirmukta
bhajante mam drdhavratah*

येषाम् - Of whom, तु - but, अन्तगतम् - is at an end, पापम् - sin, जनानाम् - of men, पुण्यकर्मणाम् - of men of virtuous deeds, ते - they, द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ताः - freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites, भजन्ते - worship, माम् - Me, दृढव्रताः - men steadfast in vows.

28. But those men of virtuous deeds whose sins have come to an end, who are freed from the delusion of the pairs-of-opposites, steadfast in vows, worship Me.

“Men of virtuous deeds,” as a result of their actions “come to cleanse all their sinful nature” is a declaration that needs to be rightly understood. Sin is not the nature of man; according to Vedanta, it is only the tarnish that has come to dim the brilliance of the Self, due to an error of judgement in the individual. The cravings of the mind-and-intellect to live in subservience to the calls and appetites of the grosser outer world, is the root-cause for the negative values entertained by us, which ultimately result in ‘sins’. He is called a sinful-person in whom his body makes the heartiest calls on his time and attention. In such a one, the body becomes seemingly the dominant partner and ‘enslaves’ the Self. The extrovert life—a life spent in pursuing the satisfaction of the sensuous desires, the mere consolation of every

paltry emotion, and the fulfilment of each wayward desire—is the way of the sinful.

Such a passionate animal-life leaves gross impressions upon the mind and the intellect. Impressions (*Vasanas*) decide the future flow of thoughts. As the thoughts, so the actions. And the actions deepen the *Vasanas*!

To break this chain of 'Vasana-thought-action' which is now digging the grave of the individual's peace and tranquillity, it is advised to start a new line of meritorious action. Merit (*punya*) is a contrast to sin (*papa*) and, therefore, it is constituted of actions, feelings, and thoughts dedicated to the godly and the divine. All introvert actions undertaken in the recognition of "the Self I am," should create in their wake new impressions. In the long run, the patterns of sin that existed in the bosom are wiped out and the new divine designs are created therein.

Such a prepared mind-and-intellect, from which almost all its negativities have been rubbed off, "freed from the delusion of the pairs-of-opposites," becomes an instrument that can, with single-pointed steadfastness and firm resolve, meditate upon the Self.

What would be the motive in the heart of those who are thus meditating upon the Self, when their minds have been re-adjusted by living the life-divine?

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।

ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ॥ २९ ॥

29 jaramaranamoksaya

mam asritya yatanti ye

te brahma tad viduh krtsnam

adhyatmam karma ca khilam

जरामरणमोक्षाय - For liberation from old age and death, माम् - Me, आश्रित्य - having taken

refuge in, यतन्ति - strive, ये - who, ते - they, ब्रह्म - Brahman, तत् - that, विदुः - know, कृत्स्नम् - the whole, अध्यात्मम् - knowledge of the self, कर्म - action, च - and, अखिलम् - whole.

29. Those who strive for liberation from old age and death, taking refuge in Me,—they realise in full that Brahman, the whole knowledge of self and all action.

Those who thus strive diligently to cleanse their hearts of their wrong tendencies and bring their minds so purified for the higher contemplation of the Self, they do so in order to gain, "the freedom from old age and death." Modern world is also striving to discover methods of arresting death and avoiding old age. This physical continuity of existence in the world is not the goal that has been hinted at here in the Science of Spiritual Evolution.

Birth, growth, disease, decay and death, are the great modifications that should come into the life of every man or being that continues in its present manifestation to the ripe old age of its full existence. Modification, as an experience of change, is the agonising source of groaning pains. If change were not, happiness is the result. The attempt of a spiritual seeker in his meditation upon the Self is to get over all his identifications with the realm of change, and the entire province of change is indicated by these two familiar terms "*old age and death*".

Such a true meditator meditating upon the Self, comes to realise his identity and oneness with the Conscious Principle in him, the Self. The Self in the individual (*Atman*) is the Eternal Truth which is the Substratum for the whole Universe (*Brahman*). To realise the Self is to become the Brahman, since, the

Self in the individual is the One Self everywhere. This non-duality of the Truth is implied here in this stanza when it declares that those who meditate upon Me, the Self, come to "*know the Brahman*".

An ordinary man of the world, intelligent and sincere though he be, when he comes to read and understand Vedanta, he is apt to come to the hasty conclusion that the realisation of the *Brahman* is, indeed, a glorious achievement, but that it has nothing to do with the life in the world thereafter. In short, it is the general misconception in Hinduism, that the religious man must leave the world and live in a strange realm of his own, self-exiled from the destinies and joys, problems and achievements, failures and successes of the Society in which he lives !!

This dire misconception has brought about more slur upon our culture than anything else. That the man of realisation is not thereafter an impotent fool in the wordly transactions has been clearly brought out here when Krishna says that the Perfected One not only realises the All-Pervading Self, but at once comprehends "*the working of the psychological forces (Adhyatma) in him and becomes proficient in all activities (Karma)*" It is very well realised by all men of experience that he alone can serve the world who has a full and complete knowledge of the psychology of the world and has also a perfect control over his own mental life. A man of harmonious perfection is the fittest instrument to sing the Song of Truth and such an individual must be the best integrated personality, smart and efficient in all activities.

Continuing the same idea and expressing how a man of wisdom is a man of all-knowledge and all efficiency Krishna declares :

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।
 प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥ ३० ॥

30. *sadhibhutadhidaivam mam*
sadhiyajnam ca ye viduh
prayanakale pi ca mam
te vidur yuktacetasaḥ

साधिभूताधिदैवम् - With the *Adhibhuta*, with the *Adhidaiva* together, माम् - Me, साधियज्ञम् - with the *Adhiyajna* together, च - and, ये - who, विदुः - know, प्रयाणकाले - at the time of death, अपि - even, च - and, माम् - me, ते - they, विदुः - know, युक्तचेतसः - steadfast in mind.

30. Those who know Me with the *Adhibuta* (pertaining to elements, the world of objects) *Adhidaiva* (pertaining to the Gods, the sense-organs) and the *Adhiyajna* (pertaining to the sacrifice, all perceptions), know Me even at the time of death, steadfast in mind.

Not only that the man of realisation understands all the vagaries of the mind and the nature of all activities, but he gains a perfect knowledge of the world-of-objects (*Adhibhuta*), the secrets behind the workings of the sense-organs, mind and intellect (*Adhidarva*), and the conditions under which all perceptions—physical, mental and intellectual—(*Adhiyagna*), can best take place.

The ordinary idea that a man of God is an impracticable man, inefficient to live a successful life in the world, may be true as far as a dedicated devotee of a particular God-form or a Prophet is concerned. The *Upasaka* is one who is so fully engrossed with his emotions and thoughts,

dedicated to the Lord of his heart, that he has neither the interest nor the capacity to know the ways of the world. But the Man of Perfection, as conceived of by the Science of Vedanta, is not only a man of perfection in the realm of the Spirit, but he is at all times, on all occasions, under all situations, a master of himself and a dynamic force to be reckoned with.

He essentially becomes the leader of the world, as he is a master of his own mind, as well as the minds of the entire living kingdom. To him, thereafter, everything becomes clear, and such a Man of Perfection lives upon the world as a God in his Knowledge of the worlds, both within and without.

These two closing stanzas of this chapter do not of themselves explain all the terms used in them. They represent a summary of the following chapter. In a *Sastra* this is one of the traditional methods in the art of connecting two consecutive chapters together. In the form of *mantras* these two stanzas indicate the contents and the theme of the following chapter.

In short, the chapter closes with a total assertion that, “*he who knows Me knows everything*”, and he is a man who will come to guide the destinies of the world, not only in his own times, but in the days to come, as Lord Krishna himself did.

ओं तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां
योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगो नाम
सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥ ७ ॥

*ity srimad bhagavadgitasupanisatsu
brahmavidyayam yogasastre
sri krsnarjunasamvade
Gyanavigyanayogo nama
Saptamodhyayah.*

Thus, in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad-Gita, in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture of Yoga, in the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the seventh discourse ends entitled :

THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

The Vedantic ideologies, preached in the Upanishads had become, by the time of Vyasa, mere speculative narrations of poetic Perfections, divorced from the actualities of life. The Hindus, thus got estranged from the essential glory and strength of their culture, were to be resurrected by showing to them the practical beauty and fire that lie concealed in the philosophical speculations. In this chapter Krishna has emphasized and indicated beyond all doubts how Vedantic perfections can be achieved and lived to the glory of the successful seeker and to the blessing of the generation in which he lives. It is most appropriate that the chapter is named as "*The Yoga of Knowledge and Wisdom*".

Mere knowledge is of no practical use. Wisdom is the glow that knowledge imparts to the individual. The fulfilment of knowledge in an individual is possible only when he is made a Man of Wisdom. Knowledge can be imparted, but Wisdom cannot be given. The philosophical portion of all religions provides the knowledge, the instructional section of all religions provides techniques by which the knowledge can be assimilated and digested into the very texture of the devotees' inner lives, and thereby every religion seeks to create Men of Wisdom, who have fulfilled their lives, justified their religion, and blessed their generation.

SREEMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA

CHAPTER VIII

INTRODUCTION

To discriminate between the higher and the lower nature of the Eternal Self, and identifying with the higher to play at will with all the freedom and joy in the fields of Its lower manifestation, is to be the perfect Man of Wisdom—a God upon earth, ever-liberated from the threats and sorrows of the finite. The aim of Vedanta is to carve out of the ordinary folk such Blissful men of Wisdom. In the earlier chapter, therefore, a vivid description of both Knowledge and Wisdom was elaborately given.

Continuing the idea contained in the previous chapter, herein Krishna starts with the glorification of the Man of Wisdom and declares that he is not only perfect because of his special knowledge and experience of the Self, but because he becomes thereby a perfect and well-integrated personality at all levels of his existence and contacts of the world. He easily proves himself to be a man of godly efficiency and balance, in all situations, and conditions, at all places and times.

A man-of-action, as Arjuna is, the mere theoretical explanation of Vedanta, as given out in the literature of the Upanishads, cannot encourage him to live upto it. Therefore, it has to be explained how a man of Self-realisation, when properly trained and when his spiritual practices are intelligently continued, becomes a dependable man of sure success in all fields of activity—be it on the battlefield, or in the court of the enemies or in the Jamuna-banks: whether engaged in grazing the cows or pleasing the Gopinis or tearing the throat of the tyrant **Kamsa !**

If in the preceding chapter a mere mention alone is made that there is a practical aspect of Vedanta, apart from its theoretical literature, no definite technique for practically carving out the Vedantic ideals in the individual has been given there. Here, however, the technique has been completely and fully explained, and the relationship between the Eternal Spirit and the delusory realm of names and forms, the lower *prakriti*, has been clearly indicated. Exemplary definitions indicating the Inexpressible, the Absolute Truth, are found in this chapter. A dull nit-wit, vainly labouring to follow the path of pure reason and discrimination, alone can feel not thrilled or uplifted to an unearthly height of inspiration by this chapter.

The last chapter concluded with a statement that the Man of Wisdom not only realises the Absolute Essence that sustains the world, but he at once comes to master the world-of-objects, the organs of perception-and-action, and the instrument-of-comprehension, so that he proves himself a dynamic actor ever carving out enduring successes everywhere. Herein, this idea has been made more and more clear by Lord Krishna, with his explanation; when once we know the ocean, the waves, wavelets, the foam and the lather are all known by us. Similarly, Self is the Reality on which all actions, the instruments of action, and the world of perceptions are superimposed, and therefore, by knowing the Self everything is known.*

* Refer Swamiji's "Discourses on Mundakopanishad"—Disciple Sownaka requests Guru Angiras: "What is That, my Lord, Which being known all these become known?" (*Kasminnu Bhagavo Vignathae Sarvavidam Vignatham Bhavathi—thi*)

ॐ श्रीपरमात्मने नमः

अथाष्टमोऽध्यायः

अर्जुन उवाच

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १ ॥

ARJUNA UVACA

1. kim tad brahma kim adhyatnam
kim karma purusottama
adhibhutam ca kim proktam
adhidaivam kim ucyate

किम् - What, तत् - that, ब्रह्म - Brahman, किम्
what, अध्यात्मम् - Adhyatma, किम् - what, कर्म - action,
पुरुषोत्तम - O best among men, अधिभूतम् - Adhibhuta,
च-and, किम्-what, प्रोक्तम् declared, अधिदैवम् - Adhidaiva,
किम् - what, उच्यते - is called.

ARJUNA SAID :—

1. What is that Brahman ? What is the Adhyatma ?
What is action ? O best among men, what is
declared to be the Adhibhuta ? And what is
Adhidaiva said to be ?

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।

प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥

2. adhiyajnah katham ko tra
dehe smin madhusudana
prayanakale ca katham
jneyo si niyatatmabhih

अधियज्ञः - Adhiyajna, कथम् - how, कः - who, अत्र here, देहे - in body, अस्मिन् - this, मधुसूदन - O Madhu-sudana, प्रयाणकाले - at the time of death, च - and कथम् - how, ज्ञेयः - knowable, असि - are you, नियतात्मसिः - by the self-controlled.

- 2: Who, and how, is Adhiyajna here in this body O destroyer of Madhu? And how at the time of death, are you to be known by the self-controlled ?

The new technical terms, all of a sudden used in the last two stanzas of the previous chapter, (the Essential Being, the Essential Deity, the Essential Sacrifice, etc.) which are to be known * so that such Men of Wisdom, "continue to know Me even at the time of death, steadfast in mind,"¹¹ confuses Arjuna.

This chapter opens with the seeker questioning his teacher with a view to getting an exact definition for each of these new terminologies used in his learned discourse. Not only that Arjuna enquires for an explanation of the terms used, but he is also anxious to know how exactly can one realise the Self at the time of death when one gains perfect self-control as a result of one's constant spiritual practices in life.

The Lord explains each term exhaustively in the following stanzas :

* Some commentators attempt to assign various kinds and degrees of knowledge of the various types of votaries. This is rather artificial, sectarian, and the Sanskrit text under review surely cannot bear the strain of such an interpretation.

* * VII-30.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ३ ॥

SRI BHAGAVAN UVACA

3. aksaram brahma paramam
svabhavi dhyatmam ucyate
bhutabhavodbhavakaro
visargah karmasamjnitah

अक्षरम् - Imperishable, ब्रह्म - Brahma, परमम्
Supreme, स्वभावः - (His) Nature, अध्यात्मम् - उच्यते - is
called, (भूतभावोद्भवकरः) - that which causes the origin
of beings, विसर्गः - Offering (to Gods), कर्मसंज्ञितः - is
called work.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID :—

3. Brahman is the imperishable, the Supreme ;
His essential nature is called self-knowledge ;
the offering : the creative force that causes
beings to spring forth into manifestation is
called work.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ ४ ॥

4. adhibhutam ksaro bhavah
purusas ca dhidaivatam
adhiyajno ham eva tra
dehe dehabhrtam vara

अधिभूतम् - Adhibhuta, क्षर - perishable, भावः -
nature, पुरुष - the soul, च and, अधिदैवतम् - Adhidhaiva

अधियज्ञ - Adhiyajna, अहम् - I, एव - alone, अत्र - here, देहे - in the body, देहभूताम् - of the embodied, वर O the best.

4. Adhibhuta (or elements) constitutes My perishable Nature, and the Indweller (or the essence) is the Adhidaivata; I alone am the Adhiyajna here in this body, O best of the embodied.

In the briefest language possible Lord Krishna hints at the connotation of the terms he had used previously in the conclusion of the previous chapter. The revolutionary preacher, Krishna, acting as the mouth-piece of a great movement of renaissance in Hinduism, has throughout in the Geeta been proving himself to be a creative thinker, capable of injecting new vigour into dying terminologies and exhausted theories. Nowhere else can it be so vividly apparent as when the Lord gives his conception of **Karma** in the context here.

“Imperishable is the Supreme Brahman”—the term Brahman indicates the one changeless and imperishable Essence behind the world of phenomenon. Subjectively it becomes the Self, the Conscious Principle, which illumines the body, mind and intellect, during all their pilgrimages from birth to death through the infinite varieties of their vicissitudes.

“Its presence in each individual body is called Adhyatma”—Though the Self is formless and subtle, and, therefore, all-pervading, its glory and might, power and grace, are felt, experienced, and lived by each physical structure, and this Self, expressing Itself through a given embodiment, as though conditioned by it, is called the **Adhyatma**, Sankara brings it out very clearly when he

explains the term as, "**the Principle that graces all bodies as its essential Self**" *

In the second line is the revolutionary definition of work as conceived of by Krishna, in whom we see both action and spiritual glory wedded together in a happy nuptial. It says, "**the creative force that causes beings and things to spring into existence is called work.**" In order to limit the idea that Karma means only the ritualistic worship, even Sankara here has forced upon the word Visarga its narrow sense as the "act of offering," considers the sacrificial rituals so performed as the cause for the origin of all creatures. In the context of Geeta, a sacred text-book of instruction for every man under all conditions, a more elaborate meaning whenever possible, should be read into every stanza.

Work is not only the turn-over ; the turn-over can be ordered and brought about by sheer labour. The term 'work' connotes something deeper, subtler, diviner. The creative urge that is behind every active intellect, which ultimately fulfills itself in the creation of things and beings, that subtle spiritual strength is called 'Karma'; all else, is mere sweat and toil, dust and blood, heaving and sobbing, smiling and sighing, hoarding and wasting.

"**The Adhiboota is the perishable existence**"—As a contrast to the Imperishable is the perishable equipment, the world of prakriti, through which the potential dynamism, vigour and glory of the Infinite Self express themselves. Between the Kshara and Akshara, there is as much difference as between a steam-engine and the steam, the running car and the horse-power in the petrol, the singing radio and the electric current. In short, by the term 'perishable' (kshara) the whole world of phenomenon

* ' Brahmaraḥ—Prati-dehḥ m Prathyagatma—bhavaḥ—Swabhavaḥ

of the Universe is indicated. Subjectively the equipments of cognition, feeling and perception, constitute in the main the destructible or the perishable factors in us.

"The Adhidaivata is the Indweller"—The term Indweller is used to indicate the "special faculty" that presides over each apparatus of knowledge and activity in the living creatures. The presiding dieties of the sense-organs, of the mind, and of the intellect, are called the Devatas, which are nothing other than the faculty of vision in the Eyes, the faculty of audition in the ears, the power of smelling in the nose, and so on.

"Adhiyagna, here in this body, I alone am"—We have already seen that the Yagna here means the "act of perception, feeling or thought." As in the Yagna, here also oblations, the sense-objects, are poured into the Yagna-altar the sense-organs, when the Devata, the particular faculty in it, is propitiated and invoked, and as a blessing from it we gain the fruit thereof, viz. the knowledge of the perception. In this Adhiyagna, in the subjective yagna-act of perception, it is quite evident that the One Vital Factor that dominates the entire activity is the Self, the Principle of Life.

By giving these definitions, the Lord is on the whole suggesting with an under-current of implications, that the Eternal Self alone is the Real, and all else are delusory super-impositions upon it. Therefore, to know the Self is to know everything. And having known the Eternal as one's own real nature, one is free to act or not to act, and to play or not play in any of these fields of the Not-Self.

An individual who lives in the Awareness of this Knowledge, ever-conscious of the play of the Self at all levels of his personality,—physical, mental and intellectual—such an individual naturally comes to experi-

ence himself as a Divine Witness observing the very process of death that clips off layer by layer his self-chosen connections with the Not-Self !

What happens to one who leaves the body in the awareness of the Self ? Listen :—

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेबरम् ।

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥

5. antakale ca mam eva
smaran muktva kalevaram
yah prayati sa madbhavam
yati na sty atra samsayah

अन्तकाले - At the time of death, च - and, माम् - me, एव - only, स्मरन् - remembering, मुक्त्वा - leaving, कलेबरम् - body, य - who, प्रयाति - goes forth, सः - he, मद्भावं - me being, याति - attains, नास्ति - not, अत्र - here, संशयः - doubt.

5. And whosoever, leaving the body, goes forth remembering Me alone, at the time of his death, he attains My being; there is no doubt about this.

Vyasa is never tired of emphasizing the cardinal philosophical idea in Vedanta that an individualised-Ego continues identifying with a given physical body only so long as it needs that particular instrument for eking out its desired quota of experiences. Once it is over it 'kicks the bucket' and walks off—forgetting all its duties, its relationships and its vanities in its present existence. At this moment of divorce from a given body it is but logical to believe that its thoughts would be about the

most predominant desire or aspiration in it—either gathered in its past moments of existence or acquired in its present life. The techniques of meditation and devotion constitute the art of tutoring the mind to keep in it an unflickering flame of aspiration, so carefully trimmed and fed always, that such a seeker, “at the time of death, meditating on Me alone goes forth leaving the body.”

This last powerful willing, determined by the last thought, decides its destinies in the future. An ego that lived all its life, in its ego-centric vanities, identifying itself with merely the flesh and ever catering for its appetites, will be hoarding such sensuous *vasanas* that it must necessarily take a form lower in the evolutionary scale, in order that its acquired animal instincts may thereby be the maximum fulfilled.

On the other hand, an individual in his discrimination when he comes to recognise the futility of a merely lascivious life, and, therefore aspires for his release from the thralldom of the flesh, he surely moves higher up on his path of evolution, when he retires from his present embodiment. Faithfully following this theory, which is at once logical and reasonable, the Science of Life as enunciated in Vedanta declares that the last thoughts of a dying man order his future embodiments and determine his environments therein.

Therefore, Krishna insists here that one who leaves the physical structure with his mind completely turned towards the Self will naturally reach the Eternal and the Immortal, “the Supreme Abode, reaching which there is no return.” *

No statement of anyone, however great he may be—may he be the Lord Himself adorned in his full glory—is acceptable to the Aryan mind unless that statement is

* Ibid 21,

preceded by an indication of the entire line of arguments and thoughts, that lead to the conclusions in the statement. Krishna respects, all through the Geeta, this sacred tradition of the **Aryan Dharma** and, therefore, wherever he makes a direct statement he either follows it up with a set of incontrovertible arguments, or, wherever this is not possible, in a peroration he guarantees the truth of his statement. “**There is no doubt about this,**” adds Krishna at the close of the stanza under review, for purposes of a positive assertion.

But, then, are there no arguments that can conclusively prove the statement ? Listen :—

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेबरम् ।

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥ ६ ॥

6. yam- yam va pi smaran bhavam
 tyajaty ante kalebaram
 tam-tam evai ti kaunteya
 sada tadbhavabhavitah

यम् - which, यम् - which, वा - or, अपि - even, स्मरन्-remembering, भावम् - nature (idea or object), त्यजति - leaves, अन्ते - in the end, कलेबरम् - the body, तम् - to that, तम् - to that, एव - only, एति - goes, कौन्तेय - O Kaunteya, सदा - constantly, तद्भावभावितः - thinking of that object.

6. Whosoever at the end leaves the body, thinking upon any being, to that being only he goes, O Kaunteya (O son of Kunti) because of his constant thought of that being.

Declaring this well-thought-out conclusion of the Rishis, the self-dedicated thinkers of India, the Lord says, **"whatever object one remembers while leaving the body, that alone is reached by him"**—be it on a dog or on a God.

Perhaps, some misguided old men of false renunciation, in their senile ataxy, must have come to a lunatic and imaginary conclusion that **'whatever one thinks in the last moment, that he becomes.'** But the son of the Aryan-era is not ready to accept it. Arjuna, as a true representative of that age, must have suffered sufficiently at the blank bluffing in the previous stanza, and when Krishna started to overwhelm his student by quoting the wise of the land, Arjuna's patience must have come to an end, and the royal displeasure must have been sufficiently expressed in his raised eye-brows. The Teacher in Krishna notices it, and respecting this healthy trait in the Hindu, hastens to explain the scientific foundation upon which the entire edifice of the above mentioned theory stands: **"O Son of Kunti, because of his constant thought of that object."**

"As you think so you become" is a theory which is obvious to every intelligent man, even without the intervention and explanation from any wise-looking philosopher. Thoughts guide all actions, and at any given moment the run of thoughts in an individual is governed and ordered by the channel of thinking, which he himself had ploughed in his bosom with his conscious and wilful thoughts and actions in the past. Naturally, therefore, a mental equipment that had been struggling during its existence in an embodiment, to detach from all its identifications with that embodiment, and to fix itself in the contemplation of the Real and the Eternal would be creating new channels of divine aspirations (**Adhyatma Samskar**). The time of death, when the occupant of the

body has packed itself up to quit, is not the moment to decide or to plan its travel. At such a moment instinctively its thoughts shall run through its habitual channels and the flight of thoughts at that moment determines the direction of Ego's pilgrimage.

This stanza must have thrown a satisfying amount of illuminating light on the previous one, so that the raised brows of Arujna settle down expressing his acceptance of the theory in almost a pathetic mood of embarrassing approbation. As a deft advocate, championing the cause of Arjuna's spiritual redemption, Krishna, grabs at this psychological moment by its forelock and hammers his instructions on what Arjuna should, therefore, do in life.

Therefore :—

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मात्रैवेष्ट्यस्यसंशयः ॥ ७ ॥

7. tasmāt sarvesu kalesu
mam anusmara yudhya ca
mayy arpitamanobuddhir
mam evai syasy asamsayah

तस्मात् - Therefore, सर्वेषु - in all, कालेषु - (in) times,
माम् - me, अनुस्मर - remember, युध्य - fight, च and मय्यर्पितमनो-
बुद्धिः - with mind and intellect fixed (or absorbed)
in Me, माम् - to Me, एव - alone, एष्ट्यसि - (thou) shalt
come to, असंशयः - doubtless.

7. Therefore, at all times remember Me, and fight.
With mind and intellect fixed (or absorbed) in
Me, you shall doubtless come to me alone.

Since the path for the individual to walk upto the pinnacles of perfection is laid by his evolving thoughts, an individual's life must be lived against a constant background music of the Divine Awareness. When only half understood, this stanza kills the generation; fully understood, it can make the very same followers to constitute the best evolved society in the world. Looking around, one will have to sadly say that our Hindu brethren have chosen to cling to their partial understanding of this sacred declaration, in their Divine Bible.

"Constantly remember Me," is a half statement which the so-called religious practitioners try to live,—in homes and streets, shops and fields, and some rare few practise it in jungles—and almost all of them end their practices within a very short time and, in utter disgust they curse themselves for their unfortunate mistake in trying to live the religious life. Such melancholy desperados, move about like corpses,—daring neither to throw religion to the winds nor to maintain any more enthusiasm to live by it. The majority belongs to this misguided group who carry religion upon their skin, that covers a bleeding heart of disappointment and a buzzing head of unfulfilled desires.

Geeta as a practical text-book of religion, exhaustively chalks out how Vedanta can be faithfully lived in life. Not only that we must try to live in constant awareness of the diviner possibilities in us, and the ultimate Reality behind the world and its happenings around us, but each student of Vedanta must diligently and efficiently fight on his battle of life. Every scripture is a mirror that reflects faithfully the student's own mind and intellect; many are the unprepared ones who had come to read the Geeta and even write commentaries upon it.

It reminds us of Don Quixote—and his old horse charging against wind-mills and lamp-posts to fight the

demon who had imprisoned and kept his Queen-of-love in bondage—when we read some commentaries wherein this stanza is invoked to declare that every student of Geeta must fight. All intelligent readers can understand that Geeta is primarily an advice to Arjuna, at a given specific situation, wherein he gets ready to run away from a field of action in which he is called upon to act and to win. The poet-philosopher, Vyasa, certainly employs here a pun on the word 'fight' It applies to Arjuna as a direct advice, and to all the generations of the Geeta-students as an indirect instruction, to fight the battle of their own lives.

No religion can continuously serve the society unless it gives its faithful followers instructions and guidance on how best they can live their day-to-day life. Here is an instruction which is at once applicable in the secular fields of living and in the divine realms of life. Here is a simple instruction by which not only the **standards of living** can be raised but the **very standard of life** can be divinised.

There are many who suspect that this method of splitting the mind between religion and life is dangerous for true success in either of them. This, in fact, is a thoughtless argument. In no action is man's mind totally invested where his hands function. Ordinarily a major portion of the mind all the time wanders into the jungles of dreadful fears, or into the caves of jealousies, or into the deserts of imaginary possibilities of failures. Instead of thus wasting the total mental energy and dynamism, Krishna is advising here that a truly successful man striving to achieve the highest, both in the world of plurality outside and in the realm within, should rest his mind in the soft and peaceful feet of Truth. He can then pour out the entire wealth of his capacities into the action in hand, and thereby assure to himself the highest laurels both here and in the hereafter.

Religion is not divorced from life in Hinduism. If they are separated, both of them will die away. They are as intimately connected as head and the trunk; separated neither can live. Even while living through the turmoils of existence, a true seeker must learn to keep continuously his mind upon the awareness of his Real Nature and the Substratum of the world in one vast embrace of blissful homogeneity. This is not difficult, nor is it impracticable.

An actor, playing the part of a king in a drama, can never completely forget that he has a wife and a child in his own house in the outskirts of the city. In case he comes to forget his personal identity and acts as the king even outside the stage, he will be immediately segregated, and moved to a lunatic asylum for the safety of the society ! Because he constantly remembers his own real identity, he is none the less efficient as the actor. Similarly, in the continuous cognition of our Divine Nature also, we can act in the world without any hindrance, and thereby add a glow to our achievements and soften the reactions of any disappointments that we might meet on our life's pilgrimage.

A truly educated man never forgets his education : it becomes part and parcel of his very nature and in every thought, word and action of his, he brings out the fragrance of his education. So too, the man of constant awareness of his Divine Self will be acting in the world as a master-mind : all his actions soaked in selflessness, all his thoughts flavoured with love and all his feelings matured in kindness. This is the secret by which the Vedic civilisation enchanted the world of their times and compelled the adoration of all later generations !

The moment we forgot this, the decadence of Hinduism started. Even the greatest heroes like Arjuna become hysterical creatures—psychologically shattered and intel-

lectually incapacitated to meet the challenges of life. As a Hindu evangelist, Krishna is giving in the Geeta the right direction to the current of the Hindu revival-movement set at the time of Mahabharata.

When an individual has thus satisfied all the reasonable calls of duty on him, made by the society, he not only becomes a faithful member of the society, but side by side, he evolves culturally too, until at last he comes to soar also to the highest in his spiritual stature.

This is not possible merely by putting some marks on the fore-head, or by keeping the hair on the head in a particular fashion. Wearing a thread across the trunk is no guarantee for spiritual evolution. These physical paraphernalia can be useful only if we know how to make use of them. If I purchase a radio and live by it in a remote village, where there is no electricity, I will enjoy no music in my humble hut. By consulting a mirror a blind man cannot know the beauty of his face.

Krishna is here very expressively clear when he says that, an individual who lives a life of battle to win righteous profits, in his constant remembrance of the Lord, his "*mind and intellect get absorbed in Me.*" Following the above mentioned* theory of 'as you think so you become,' "*you shall come to me,*" when once the mental equipment gets absorbed in the Self, through the process of constant contemplation on the Self with a single-pointed devotion.

Further :—

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ ८ ॥

* Ibid 5 & 6

8. *abhyasayogayuktena*
cetasa na nyagamina
paramam purusam divyam
yati partha nucintayan

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन - (with the mind made) steadfast by the method of habit meditation, चेतसा - with the mind, न - not अन्यगमिना - moving towards any other thing, परमम्-Supreme, पुरुषम्-Purusha, दिव्यम् - the resplendent, याति - goes, पार्थ - O Partha, अनुचिन्तयन् - meditating.

8. With the mind not moving towards any other thing, made steadfast by the method of habitual meditation, and constantly meditating on the Supreme Purusha, the Resplendent, O Partha ! he goes (to Him).

The term 'death' mentioned here is not only the physical death, but it is also the "death of the ego" which is to be brought about through the steady practice of meditation. This stanza is added to the discourse to show that after the sublimation of the limited ego, one can live in full Godly awareness as a liberated God-man, even here while living this very life.

One who is practising the above method of living in the world, 'as a sojourner therein, and not as a native of it,' and who is training the mind constantly to rest upon the contemplation of the Self, he becomes single-pointed in his concentration. This, in fact, is a revolutionary application of the techniques of prayer and concentration (*Upasana*) as explained in the *Vedas* and also the methods of devotion and surrender championed in the *Puranas*. The method advised in the previous stanza, is

religion lived in the market-place; the every-day-*Sanyas* for the man of action in the very fields of his own activities.

By his practice the devotee develops single-pointedness of the mind which helps to integrate his intellect. With such well-tuned up and nobly well-adjusted instruments of perception and comprehension, intuitive realisation of the Divine, the Self, becomes easy. "*Dwelling on the Supreme, Resplendent Purusha, O son of Pritha, one goes to Him.*" With integrated mind whatever the individual meditates intensively upon, he must come to gain it immediately. Thus, the stanza indicates an ampler significance than what has been so far declared. This Realisation of the Self and gaining thereby one's identity with It, can actually take place in this very same life, if, with the prepared mind and intellect one can, with steadfastness, meditate upon Me, "*the Supreme Resplendent Purusha.*"

The term *Purusha* as applied to the Self, is a philosophical nomenclature borrowed from the *Sankhyan* contrast of the Self (*Purusha*) with the Not-Self (*Prakriti*). And, the Self is considered Resplendent (*Divya**).

The term that has been used to indicate the one who meditates upon the Self (*Anuchintayan*) is very significant. Thought of the same species when made to run towards one fixed illumining goal, in an unbroken flow, is called meditation. The prefix '*Anu*' in '*Anuchintayan*' provides this significant meaning of the continuity of the flow of thought, in one determined channel of contemplation. **

What are the specific qualities of this grand Purusha upon whom we are to constantly meditate?

* Dyotanat : because It illuminates the emotions and thoughts,

* * Refer Swamiji's '*Meditation & Life.*'

कविं पुराणमनुशासितार

मणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।

सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप-

मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ९ ॥

9. *Kavim puranam anusasitaram
anor aniyamsam anusmared yah
Sarvasya dhataram achintyarupam
adityavarnam tamasah parastat*

कविम् - Omniscient, पुराणम् - ancient, अनुशासितारम् - the Ruler (of the whole world,) अणोः - than atom, अणीयांसम् - minuter, अनुस्मरेत् - remembers, यः - who, सर्वस्य - of all, धातारम् - supporter, अचिन्त्यरूपम् - one whose form is inconceivable, आदित्यवर्णम् - effulgent like the sun, तमसः - from the darkness, (of ignorance), परस्तात् beyond.

9. Whosoever meditates upon the Omniscient the Ancient, the Ruler (of the whole world), the Minuter than an atom, the Supporter of all, of Form inconceivable, Effulgent like the sun and beyond the darkness (of ignorance)

By holding the mind constantly in the contemplation of the Self, it was promised that the devotee can develop in himself such a powerful and divine trait that at the time of its departure it can come to entertain easily the thoughts of the Divine. By a very subtle implication it was also suggested in the previous stanza * that even while continuing to live in the present embodiment, the

* Ibid 5 & 6.

seeker can reach a point where the death for the ego-centric life happens. Such a total annihilation of the ignorance-created mis-conceptions and the consequent vanities can be accomplished successfully by the seekers only when their minds get totally withdrawn from the false matter-envelopments through the process of continued contemplation of the Self.

In the preceding stanzas it was also vaguely hinted at that the contemplation of the Self must be as "the *Supreme Resplendent Purusha*." If I am advised by somebody to meditate upon or think out the possibilities of 'Oxygeneliteen' it will be impossible for me, however wise a man I may be, unless I know what it is. Merely on a name, no consistent contemplation is possible. "Oxygeneliteen" is merely a word constituted of letters—it means nothing; it is only a rounded sound represented by a line of alphabets. Similarly, if I am advised by a *Sastra* to meditate upon the *Supreme Resplendent Self*, it can be only as futile as to think over the possibilities of the "Oxygeneliteen."

In a practical text-book, instructing how Vedanta can be lived, Lord, the Singer of the Geeta, has to provide Arjuna with sufficient material indicating the line of contemplation to be undertaken by the meditators. The two stanzas, now under review, gives an exhaustive design for the ordinary to make themselves successfully and profitably disciplined.

The stanza, as it stands, uses terms and terminologies which are familiar in the Upanishadic literature, and Arjuna, as a student of the Vedas, knows their imports exhaustively. Therefore, there was no need for Krishna to give lengthy discourses upon them. However, the study of these stanzas would be profitable for us, only when we

try to enquire and ascertain the volumes of suggestions that lie concealed in each term used here

These qualifying terms are as many different indications, none, of course, defining as such the Truth, but all indicating the principle of Consciousness which is the thrilling core that gives a similitude of life and reality to the inert unreal matter. No single term here, therefore, is to be understood as complete in itself. Geometrically, a point can be defined and indicated only with reference to two different sets of data. So too, here the inexpressible Reality has been almost correctly explained with these different qualifying terms

In short, contemplation of Reality through an attempt at exhaustively comprehending all the secret suggestions in the above is to prepare a mental condition in which, if that mind lives well-integrated and turned inward, it can come to a pause in an atmosphere of Infinite Experience. Under the heading 'barreling of thoughts' this subtle technique of meditation has been elsewhere explained.*

.. "Omniscient" (*Kavi*) — The Self is considered as omniscient not in the cheap meaning in which it is generally understood by hasty readers of the Vedantic lore. Omniscience does not mean the botheration of knowing all thoughts of all people, at all times and in all places. If this were the meaning, omniscience would have been the greatest hell into which the most sinful are to be packed off!! Its implications are much deeper.

The Conscious Principle, serving as a soul in an embodiment, is that which illumines all the thought-waves that rise in that particular mind, functioning in that given embodiment. The Infinite Self being one

* Refer Swamiji's "Meditation & Life" 13rd Edition. ..

everywhere, it is the same Principle that illuminates in all the different embodiments, all the thought-experiences, at all times. Just as the Sun is said to be "Seeing everything," because it illuminates all the objects on the globe, so too, the divine Principle of Awareness—the factor without which no knowledge is ever possible anywhere. Thus, the Self is considered, in terms of the world of conditioned-knowledge that we experience today, as the Supreme Knower who knows everything (Omniscient) and without whom no knowledge is ever possible.

There is a very interesting autobiography for this word (*kavi*), as it comes down to us through the avenues of time. If the Self be Omniscient (*Kavi*) then the knower of the Self, who thereby becomes the Self, is also to be considered as Omniscient (*Kavi*). Thus, in the language of the Upanishads, the Rishis came to be known by the same term *Kavayah*.

The Rishis of the Upanishads, as teachers of Vedanta, declared the experiences of their divine moments of inspiration in a language which, of its own accord, often fell into measured rhythm and systematic rhyme. Later on, an author of metrical compositions came to be called as *Kavi*, the Poet. Ninety out of every hundred of the present-day students of Geeta, when they are asked to comment upon this line, they invariably misunderstand the term and declare that the Truth is a poet (*Kavi*). And, the remaining ten parrot-like repeat that the term means Omniscient; but, unfortunately they rarely know why it is so. Such half-digested understanding of this stanza cannot serve us at all on our meditation seat.

"Ancient" (*Purana*)—The Self is considered as the most Ancient because the Eternal Truth is that which was before all creation, and remains the same all through the

ages of existence and shall ever remain the same even after the projections of pluralism have come to be absorbed. To indicate that the One Self ever remains the same everywhere, providing a Substratum even to the concept of time. It is indicated here as the Ancient *

“The Over-ruler” (*Anusasitharam*)—It is not in any way indicated here that the Self is a Sultan, tyrannically over-ruling the world. Here the term ‘Over-ruler’ is only to indicate that if the Principle of Awareness were not presiding over the multiple faculties of perception, feeling and comprehension in us, our physical, mental and intellectual experiences could not have been harmonised into a vital whole, which we consider as the meaningful existence of a life-time.

The over-Lordship mentioned herein only indicates that the Knowing Principle of Consciousness is the very essence but for which life—defined as a continuous series of experiences—in no shape is ever possible. Without mud the mud-pot cannot exist; in all pots the mud is the *over-ruler*. Just as gold in all ornaments, ocean in all waves, sweetness in all candy, so too is the Self in the Universe. It is in this sense that the term ‘Overruler’ is to be understood. To conceive God as a mighty policeman standing with two keys, one made of gold to open the gates of the heavens, and the other of iron to open the doors of hell, is a barbarous idea which has nothing very sacred in it to attract at least the intellectually awakened generations.

“Minuter than an Atom” (*Anoraniyan*)—The simplest and the smallest physically divisible particle of any Element which still maintains the specific properties of that Element is called its atom. Thus, it is indicated here that

* Chapter II-23 (Sanatanan)

the Self is the subtlest of the subtle. Subtler a thing, greater is its pervasiveness. * Water is considered subtler than a piece of ice, and the steam gained on evaporating the water is considered subtler than the water itself. In all these stages, pervasiveness is the measuring rod of their comparative subtleties. In the Upanishadic lore it is usual to consider the Self as 'the Subtlest of the Subtle' * which only indicates that "It pervades all and nothing pervades It." **

"The Nourisher of All" (*Sarvasya Dhatarām*) — The nourishment here meant is the support that sustains everything. In a cinema theatre, the changeless white screen can be considered as the nourisher of the entertainment, inasmuch as, without it, the ever-changing flow of pictures could not have given us the impression of any continuous story unravelled. However glorious may be the message that a master-painter has brought out with his brush, it is the consistent grace of the canvas behind, that nourishes and sustains the integrity and beauty of the picture. Similarly, if the One Consciousness were not illuminating constantly the ever-changing flux of things and happenings around and within us, from birth to death, through all conditions and states of our existence, the homogeneous oneness of life would never have been ours to react with and feel fulfilled.

"Of form inconceivable" (*Achintyaroopam*) — If there be a Factor that is the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Over-ruler, the Subtlest of the subtle, and the Nourisher of all, and when we are advised to meditate upon It, then it is possible that we come immediately to a false notion that

* Read Swamiji's "Discourses on Kenopanishad",

* "Sukshmat Shukshma'ra" — "Anoraneeyan" — Kathopanishad

* * Refer "Discourse on Isavasyopanishad" — Opening Mantra-Isavasyam Itam sarvam.

the Self can be conceived of, and comprehended as any finite object or idea, by their limited faculties of head or heart. To remove this wrong idea and to emphasize that the Infinite cannot be comprehended by the finite instruments of perception, feeling or understanding,—but can only be apprehended when these equipments are transcended,—that the Singer of Geeta is particularly anxious to inform his students that the Self is of “*the Form Inconceivable*” While it is inconceivable, it is not inexperienceable, s.nce, on transcending the equipment of experience, the individual, in a process of Divine Awakening, can apprehend It to be of his own Essential Nature.

“Luminous like the Sun” (*Adityavarnam*) — If the implication of the above term (*Achintyaroopam*) be true, no intelligent seeker can arrest his temptation to doubt as to how the Self could be at all ever realised? As seekers we live and strive within the limitations of our own mind and intellect. Every moment of our existence we are gathering a harvest of experience only through the use of the different equipments given to us. Living as we are, rooted in our false-identifications with these equipments, in the early days of our Spiritual efforts, the seeker in us should necessarily feel despaired at the impossible conception and the mad mission of “knowing the Un-knowable” —conceiving the In-conceivable—understanding the Un-understandable,—or experiencing the In-experienceable.

The Self is defined as the Un-understandable, or the In-conceivable, or In-experienceable, etc., only to indicate that the instruments of cognition, experience and apprehension are not available for functioning in the Self. The dream-gun, with which the dreamer had shot the dream-enemies of his dream-world, cannot be handled or made use of from the moment he wakes up. Even the bloody hands of a dreamer after a dream-murder become automatically clean without either soap or water, the moment

he wakes up. "So long as man is identifying with his limiting adjuncts, he lives in the external world of his self-projected delusory multiplicity, wherein the Self is "In-conceivable, in-experientable, in-comprehensible." But the moment these adjuncts are transcended, through a process of steadfast contemplation of the Self, he awakes upto his own Nature of Pure Being.

Once having understood this much of the fundamental concept of Vedanta, it becomes easy to appreciate the depthless beauty of the example of the sun provided here by the Flute-bearer. In order to see the sun, no other light is necessary, as the sun is the source of all light, the one illuminator that illuminates everything else in its beams. Just as in the physical world the sun in its self-effulgence is self-evident, so too, in the spiritual realm to know the Knowledge Absolute no other knowing-principle is needed. The dreamer can never *know* the waker, for, while knowing the waking-state the dreamer ends himself to *become* the waker; to awaken oneself is to know the waker: to *know* the waker is to *become* the waker. So too, on ending the ego-centric existence in the flush of a spiritual awakening, the misguided panting ego ends itself in its re-discovery that it is always nothing but the Self, at all times. This vast suggestion is cramped into the mystic picture of words: "luminous like the sun."

"Beyond all Darkness" (*Tamasah-parastat*) —The limited and the finite example of the sun calls into the heart of a student some dangerous mis-givings. The sun in the heavens is no doubt resplendent, but only during the day-time hours; and even during the day-time there are various degrees of intensity for the sun-light experienced by the living kingdom. If the Self is "*Luminous like the sun,*" then the industrious student may gather that the Self also varies in its intensity and that there are periods of time when It is not at all available! To

remove these two fallacious ideas that the Self is variable in nature and sometimes totally absent—this qualifying term is used here. The very limitation of the sun, meaning the darkness of the night, is negated when Krishna says that the Self is “*beyond the darkness*” of ignorance or Maya.

He who meditates upon the Self thus, as Omniscient, Ancient, Over-ruler, Subtlest of the subtle, Nourisher of all, of Inconceivable Form, Self-illuminating as the Sun, and Beyond all traces of ignorance, he is the one “*who goes to Him.*” *

SREEMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन
 भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
 भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक्
 स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् । १० ।

10. *Prayanakale manasa calena
 bhakthya yukto yogabalena cai va
 bhruvor madhye prana mavesya samyak
 sa tam param purusam upaiti divyam*

प्रयाणकाले - At the time of death, मनसा - with mind,
 अचलेन - unshaken, भक्त्या - with devotion, युक्तः - join-
 ed, योगबलेन - by the power of Yoga, च - and, एव -
 only, भ्रुवोः - of the two eye-brows, मध्ये - in the
 middle, प्राणम् - prana (breath), आवेश्य - having placed,
 सम्यक् - thoroughly, सः - he, तम् - that, परम् - sup-
 reme, पुरुषम् - Purusha, उपैति - reaches, दिव्यम् - res-
 plendent.

10. At the time of death, with an unshaken mind full
 of devotion, by the power of Yoga, fixing the
 whole Prana (breath) in the middle of the
 two eye-brows, he reaches that Supreme,
 Resplendent *Purusha*.

Following the word-meaning, this stanza has been,
 indeed, very often, sadly mis-understood and badly inter-
 preted.

"At the moment of death:" it would be an un-imaginable exaggeration to believe that anyone will be able to consciously bring his mind to a steady poise and with devotion (Bhakti) and strength of concentration (Yogabalam) bring the shattering and departing pranas "between the two eye-brows"—fantastic, indeed, fantastic. Such an individual, it is promised, will reach the Supreme! If roasted 'sky-flower' is prescribed for my disease, it means that a doctor is kind and wants to console me in my illness of some incurable disease!'

This section in the Geeta. is describing single-pointed meditation upon the Highest. Therefore, the expression *at the time of death* is to be understood as 'at the moment of the death of the Ego'. When all identifications with the body-mind-intellect are consciously withdrawn in the process of meditation* at the halt-moment of perfect inner silence and tranquillity, "*with the mind unmoving*" the meditator can follow the instructions contained in this stanza.

The term "*Bhakti*" is not to be understood in its cheap connotation which it has come to gather in its direct translation as 'devotion.' Self-less love seeking a fulfilment in itself when directed towards the divine with firm faith and an all-out belief is called *Bhakti*. Love itself means identifying with the object of love in such a way that the joys and sorrows of the beloved become equally poignant joys and sorrows of the lover. In short the lovers become one in their physical and emotional lives. Therefore, Sankara describes love as "the identification of the Ego with its Real Nature".

In the context of the stanza here, the important suggestion given to the meditator is that his meditation should be accompanied by a readiness to identify himself

* Refer Swamiji's "Meditation & Life".

intensively with the Principle of Awareness, which has been exhaustively indicated in the previous stanza. He must come to live the Self, within himself, at that still moment of Inward silence, which rings the death-knell of the deluded-ego.

"By the power of Yoga" (*Yoga-balena*)—This is no secret strength—the Serpent Power—which is the reserved secret of a rare few, which should not be spilt to everyone even among those who profess themselves to be the devotees of the Lord of the Hindus! The strength acquired by a meditator, when he meditates upon the Supreme, regularly for a long period of time, is the strength—the power of yoga that is indicated here. This is nothing other than the inward strength, the inward fire, that grows when the mind is withdrawn from its endless agitations and the intellect is peacefully rested upon its easy contemplations upon the infinite qualities of the Absolute.

In short, the meditator in a relatively short time discovers in himself a wealth of mental equipoise and an indescribable ready efficiency to bring his entire mental equipment exclusively for the contemplation of the Self in him. Such an individual when he is thus engaged in meditation, all his pranas are concentrated at the point of his meditation—may be "between the eye-brows", as it represents the frontal-brain, the seat of steady thought.

"*Fixing the whole prana between the two brows*"—This is no yogic method of burying oneself alive or the process of controlling the breath that is mentioned here. *Pranayama* is the control of the *prana* and not the control of the breath. The former can fulfil evolution, while the latter can only, perhaps, discipline the life in the present embodiment. To mistake *Pranayama* to be the mere

* Refer Swamiji's "Talks on Vekachoodamani"

Swasayama is one of the crudest and cruellest of paradoxes available to us to-day.

Prana is the term used in the Science of Vedanta to indicate the expression of life's vitality through the various instruments and organs of the body. Life expressing itself at the various functions in a living physical body is called the *Pranas* which according to their manifestations are classified under five main headings, *as *Prana*: the faculty of sense perception; *Apana*: the excretory system; *Vyana*: the digestive system; *Samana*: the circulatory system; and *Udana* the capacity in us to see beyond our present world of knowledge into the fields of some greater concept and live it. All these different activities are channels of dissipation through which the vital attention in us is getting exhausted. When an individual gets himself lost, in the silence of the within, at the moment of his merger with the Self, all these faculties temporarily get arrested. For a seeker walking the Path of Meditation no other violent physical practices are needed at all.

Such an individual—in whom, during the deepest moments of concentration, his mind becomes perfectly silent and tranquil; in whom, through the strength of his steadfast meditation, all manifestations of life's presence through his physical structure become controlled and arrested and when he, in his enthusiasm, totally identifies with the point of his contemplation, the Self—“*he goes to that Supreme Resplendent Self (Purusha).*”

These two stanzas are, therefore, annotations upon the second line of the eighth stanza. We can say that in no other single instance has the Hindu intelligence so successfully brought out such a vast wealth of instructions and guidance to sincere and earnest students striving on

* Refer Swamiji's "Discourses on Prasnopanishad".

the Path of Meditation, as in these two stanzas. So long as these two verses exist even if the Geeta be lost—nay even if the entire Upanishads are lost—one can say that the Hindu culture in essence cannot be wiped away from the history of the world.

As an introduction to the meditation upon Om, the following is given :

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति

विशन्ति यद्यत्नयो वीतरागाः ।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति

तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये । ११ ।

11. *yad aksharam vedavido vadanti*

visanti yad yatayo vitaragah

yad iccanto brahmacaryam caranti

tat te padam samgrahena pravakshye

यत् - which, अक्षरं - Imperishable. वेदविदः - the Veda knowers, वदन्ति - declare, विशन्ति - enter, यत् - which, यतयः - the self controlled (ascetics or Sannyasins), वीतरागाः - freed from attachment, यत् - which, इच्छन्तः - desiring, ब्रह्मचर्यम् - celibacy, चरन्ति - practice, तत् - that, ते - to thee, पदम् - goal, संग्रहेण - in brief, प्रवक्ष्ये - (1) will declare.

11. That which is declared Imperishable by the Vedaknowers; That which the Self-controlled and desire-free enter; That desiring which Brahma-

charya is practised—That Goal I will declare to thee in brief.

This stanza which is reminiscent of a famous Upanishad declaration*, while glorifying the goal, is promising that Krishna will in the following verses, explain the Supreme destination of Perfection and the means of achieving it.

Worship (*Upasana*) of the syllable OM is frequently advised in almost all the Upanishads as a sure method of making the final adjustments in the mind-intellect equipment of the meditator, so that complete success in meditation may be assured for him. From the *puranic* era onwards, meditation with faith and devotion regularly upon any of the recognised incarnations, has also been found to serve the same purpose with the same efficiency.

Here very many necessary precautions and warnings are given to the seeker, so that his spiritual pilgrimage may be easy and pleasant. The obstacles about which meditators generally complain arise from their own lack of self-withdrawal, from the false matter-envelopments in them. It is necessary that, as a science of Self Perfection, Vedanta should give not only the techniques of meditation, but also indicate for the seekers the possible pit-falls on the path, and equip them sufficiently early with all instructions as to how they can get out in case they fall into any one of these jamming ruts. This verse indicates how one can be assured of an easy path while moving ahead on the track of meditation—by carefully avoiding all extrovert desires that cater to the sensuous appetities and by practising severe and consistent self-control.

* Refer Swamiji's "Discourses on Kathopanishad"—II-15

In the opening of this chapter* the Supreme was defined as the Imperishable. Quoting himself, Krishna here emphasises, that the very same Imperishable Truth can be realised—they come to “enter into the Imperishable”—when they, the men of self-control, who are unagitated by desires, withdraw successfully from the changeable and the perishable in them.

“ *Freed from attachment* ” (*Veet-raga*) — The entire Geeta is the Song of Renunciation, not a dull-witted and uncreative renunciation, but a healthy detachment through awareful knowledge, which is the harbinger of all progress and development everywhere. The renunciation of desires is not a psychological suppression of the existing appetities, but that which takes place as a result of a natural blossoming of the intellect. The newly opened buds, after a time, renounce their soft, beautiful skirts and stand naked expressing a renunciation of the gorgeous; but in nature this happens only when the flowers are pollinated and the fruits are well in the making. The shedding of the petals may be a sacrifice or a renunciation from the stand-point of the flower-gazer, but the farmer who knows the seasons becomes happy in his knowledge that it is the arrival of the fruits, which is the very fulfilment of the flowers, that has automatically made the beautiful petals fall off.

Similarly, in the Spiritual Science of India, no doubt, there is an emphasis on the necessity of renunciation, but it is not a sad and melancholy self-denial or self-punishment, which some of the existing religions preach and practise. A renunciation that has sprung up from the fertile lands of efficient discrimination is that which is insisted upon by the intellectual giants of the Upanishads. The term “ *One freed from attachment* ” is to be, there-

* Ibid 2

fore, understood as one who has grown out of his passionate attachments, for the finite that constitute the insignificant parade of the world, in his more matured and steady understanding of the Nature and the Goal of Life.

Also it is true that the more the number of desires entertained, the greater is the mental tossing and the consequent agitations. Greater the disturbances of the mind, lesser the mental potentiality exhibited. A meditator's success depends upon his mental dynamism and his only wealth that can ease his journey is his own mental equipoise and inward peace. Therefore, as a policy, it is advised that men of least desire have the maximum chance for the greatest success in the Path of Knowledge.

"The Life of celibacy" (*Brahmacarya*) — We have already explained this in an earlier stanza, * in its most extensive implications. This verse is a total borrowing from the Kathopanishad, except that there, Lord Death, in his panting enthusiasm broke the metre, ran wild on the last line to add that "*it is OM*"*. The freedom with which the compiler of the Vedas borrows the Upanishadic stanzas, in parts or in their entirety, to suit his own convenience, clearly indicates the motive behind Vyasa, the first great expounder of Vedanta, why he laboured himself in so exhaustively painting with words the colossal canvas of the Mahabharata.

In order to indicate what the early stages of Upasana are and to indicate their results, the following is added :

* Refer Chapter VI-14

* * Refer Swamiji's "Discourses on Kathopanishad" — II. 15 -
"Om ithyate".

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।

मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ १२ ॥

12. *Sarvadvarani samyamya
mano hrdi nirudhya ca
murdhni adhaya tmanah pranam
asthito yogadharanam*

सर्वद्वाराणि - All gates, संयम्य - having controlled,
मनः - mind, हृदि - in the heart, निरुध्य - having confined,
च - and, मूर्ध्नि - in the head, आधाय - having
placed, आत्मनः - of the self, प्राणम् - breath, आस्थितः -
established (in), योगधारणाम् - practice of concentra-
tion.

12. Having closed all the gates, having confined the
mind in the heart, having fixed the life-breath
in the "head," engaged in the practice of
concentration.

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।

यः प्रयाति स्रजन्देहं सयातिपरमांगतिम् ॥ १३ ॥

13. *aum ity ekaksaram brahma
vyaharan mam anusmaran
yah prayati tyajan deham
sa yati paramam gatim*

ॐ - Om, इति - thus, एकाक्षरम् - one syllabled, ब्रह्म -
Brahman, व्याहरन् - uttering, माम् - me, अनुस्मरन् - re-
membering, यः - who, प्रयाति - departs, स्रजन् - leav-

ing, देहम् - the body, सः - he, याति - attains, परमात्मा - supreme, गतिम् - goal.

13. Uttering the one-syllabled Om---the (symbol of) Brahman and remembering Me, he who departs, leaving the body, attains the Supreme Goal.

The practice of concentration can most effectively be undertaken and efficiently continued only when three necessary conditions are fulfilled in the meditator. These are narrated here in the verse in the same sequence in which it can be practised.

"Controlling all the senses"—Each sense-organ is kept in an aperture in the physical body. The porous skin, the ear, the nose, the eyes, and the taste-buds are the five main gates through which the external stimuli reach the mental zone to agitate it. To shut these five doors through discrimination and detachment, is the first process, before the meditator can even hope to enter the field of meditation. These are the five out-lets through which not only the external world storms in and agitates the mind, but our mind also runs out to wander among its sensuous ditches. When once these tunnels-of-disturbances are blockaded, the new flow of disturbances is shut-out

"Confining the mind in the heart"—The mind, even though it is not now directly open for any onslaught by fresh contingents of sense-stimuli, it is capable of getting itself disturbed due to the previous impressions that it had gathered in its past experiences in the finite world of change and pleasure. Therefore, the instrument of emotion and feeling, it is advised, is to be confined to the 'heart'.

The term 'heart' in Vedanta is not the pumping organ that maintains the circulatory system in a physical

structure. In the field of literature and philosophy, heart is a conceptual centre in the mind from where all positive and noble thoughts of love and tenderness, kindness and charity, devotion and surrender, constantly spring up. When once the gross stimuli are held up from entering the mind, the seeker is advised not to choke his faculty of emotion and feeling, but he is directed to divinise them. Let the mind function only in the dignity and status of the heart. It has been already discussed how positive thinking brings into the mind the least amount of disturbance. Negative thoughts are such that they bring into the mind a stormy condition of cruel agitation and disgusting restlessness. ,

In short, these two advices given in the first line, together constitute what the 'categories in Vedanta' indicate—*Sama* and *Dama*—as the two main qualifications* necessary for every successful seeker striving on the Path of Knowledge.

“*Drawing the Prana into the head*”—There are very many commentators who would like to read the *Kundalini Yoga* into this line, a meaning seemingly sanctioned therein. In the context of the development of ideas in Geeta here, it seems to us that to do so is to nourish rather a carbuncle, horrid and painful. In the smooth flow of thoughts, this verse should be considered only as a reminder of what the Lord had already hinted at **which we have so exhaustively discussed in this very chapter.

Withdrawing all the *Prana*, “the vital manifestations of life through the different equipments”, into the intellect means the total withdrawal of the intellect from all

* Refer Swamiji's “Talks on Vivekachoodamani”

** Ibid 10

its identifications with the Lower, gained by dissociating ourselves from all our perceptions etc. * * This is accomplished through a process of engaging the mind-intellect totally in the contemplation of the Self. When the meditator's mind, drawn away from the sense-disturbances is purified in the realm of the diviner thoughts, and when such a mind is perfectly controlled and held steady by an intellect gushing itself out towards the contemplation of the Self as explained earlier, the existing mental condition is called "occupied in the practice of concentration" (*Yoga-dharanam.*)

In this condition of his mental and intellectual equipoise the seeker becomes fit for chanting and meditating upon the mono-syllable, OM. The rabid barkings of the orthodox that OM-chanting is meant only for a particular section of seekers, who are what they are by the sheer accident of their birth, cannot be accepted by those who respect Geeta, the Bible of Hinduism. He is fit for *OM-Upasana*, as far as Geeta is concerned, who can accomplish the above mentioned biological, psychological and intellectual conditions.

Every meditator who can make an attempt at forgetting his immediate sensual surroundings, and with the mind surcharged with joy and contentment, who can bring that mind under the total control of his discriminative intellect ..in short, the one who can mentally chant OM with ease and enthusiasm, and observe the rising OM-waves in his otherwise silenced mind...is the fit student for the worship of OM. The following line in its vaster amplitude of significance clearly brings out the same view-point.

* * * Refer Swamiji's "Discourses on Prasnopanishad" *The Five Pranas.*

* Ibid 9 and 10

"*He who departs; leaving the body*"—Often this term is found to be interpreted as "at the time of death". This constricted meaning has been nailed on to this phrase mainly by Sankara, the champion of the Path of Knowledge, in order that he may break the back-bones of those who are stooping to insist that through ritualism and worship *karma* and *upasana* alone is the Supreme to be attained. Considering this section of the Geeta as preaching a set of instructions for the pure meditator, it is amply clear that the phrase has got a deeper significance for all seekers on the Path of Meditation.

While chanting and contemplating upon the significance of OM, the seeker becomes so detached from all his delusory identifications with the false matter-envelopments on him, that the Ego sublimates; which is the true death "*leaving the body*". In his single-pointed, all-out, self-forgetful contemplation upon the significance of OM—as the Substratum on which plays the drama of life and death, projected by the mischievous mind—the seeker, in Krishna's own words "*attains the Supreme Goal*".

To discover in these lines such constructive designs for our cultural redemption and spiritual evolution, would be a truer approach and a healthier attempt, than to read into these verses a more limited and prejudiced meaning. It must be surely understood that the Upanishadic literature leaves enough assertions to justify the Vedantic belief that a mere worshipper of OM, if he can bring his mind completely withdrawn from the external world and invest it into the chanting and contemplation of the OM-symbol, "at the time of his death", he reaches, "on departing from his present embodiment", the Supreme through the path of "gradual liberation".*

* Refer "Discourses on Mundakopanishad" *Tae Brahma-lokeshu Paranthakalae*

Is self re-discovery equally so difficult for all people who are walking the path of Meditation ?

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ १४ ॥

14. *ananyacetah satatam*

yo mam smarati nityasah

tasya ham sulabha partha

nityayuktesya yoginah

अनन्यचेताः - With the mind not thinking of any other object, सततम् - constantly, यः - who, माम् - Me, स्मरति - remembers, नित्यशः - daily, तस्य - of him, अहम् - I, सुलभः - easily attainable, पार्थ - Partha, नित्ययुक्तस्य - eversteadfast, योगिनः - of Yogi.

14. I am easily attainable by that ever-steadfast Yogi who constantly remembers Me daily not thinking of anything else, O Partha.

The one who is ever-steadfast in the Life Divine and “*remembers Me*”, the Self, *always and daily* with a mind unshattered, to him the Self is easily attainable. The statements in the previous stanza are all again summarised here in a more emphatic and direct language.

A meditator who is “*ever steadfast*” is the one who does not allow his mind its full freedom to run amuck among the by-lanes of sensuality. Such a meditator alone who constantly keeps in himself the Awareness of the Self, is indicated here as the successful practitioner. This

statement belies the general belief that meditation for an hour or so at the dawn and an equal length of time at night is all that is the spiritual duty of a meditator. Many a time the Singer of the Geeta had indicated his displeasure with the concept of a mere Sunday-Religion.

In Hinduism also this limited conception of religion as a Friday-Prayer, has come to be accepted and they believe that it would bring about the necessary cultural edification and spiritual growth. This false belief is foreign to its inimitable tradition. Religion in its real sense does not preach a part-time behaviourism on the part of the devotees. No doubt, intense and single-pointed Self-application in prayer, worship or meditation is necessary once or twice a day, but the rest of the time also the devotee cannot afford to sink into the depth of moral depravity, and expect vaguely that with the prayer he has cleansed himself.

Prayer is no DDT to be sprayed now and then; nor should the Divine Altar be considered as a bath-room, where one enters dirty and walks out clean! Here Krishna is very careful to insist, with all the strength and emphasis that he can command, that the Divine Consciousness must be maintained by the seeker constantly and continuously "all through the day, daily".

To such an individual, "*I am easily attainable, O ! Arjuna*". This positive assertion has got a very important significance inasmuch as it indicates that the negation of these conditions will not be conducive even to hope for an easy success in meditation.

Why should one struggle so hard to realize the Self?
Listen :

मासुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म संसिद्धिं दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
 नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥

15. *mam upetya punarjanma
 duhkalayam asasvatam
 na pnuvanti mahatmanah
 samsidhim paramam gatah*

माम् - To me, उपेत्य - having attained, पुनः - again,
 जन्म - birth, दुःखालयम् - the place of pain, अशाश्वतम् - non-
 eternal, न - not, आप्नुवन्ति - get, महात्मानः - Mahatmas,
 or the great souls, संसिद्धिम् - to perfection, परमाम्
 highest, गताः : having reached.

15. Having attained Me, these Mahatmas (or great
 souls) do not again take birth which is the house
 of pain and is non-eternal, they having reached
 the Highest Perfection (*Moksha*).

To any practical-minded man of the world, as Arjuna was, at this juncture of the discourse, an ardent doubt can rise in his profit-hunting mental estimation of what he has heard. No action is undertaken by any man of success in the world, without considering the amount of strife that he has to put into his field of activity and the possible profit that he can reasonably expect from it. With such a calculating intellect, if one has listened to the discourse so far, it is natural that he should enquire what exactly would be the benefit that would be accruing to one, who, through “*constant and daily remembrance of the Self*” attains the Self-hood.

Estimating the benefit enjoyed by a Man of Perfection, through the realisation of the Self, it is said that

“having attained Me, the high-souled ones are no more subject to re-birth. To the philosophically thoughtful rebirth is the starting point of all pains and imperfections. Krishna also says in the verse that rebirth is the house of pain and the ephemeral.”

In the history of thoughts in the Upanishads, it is quite interesting to note how the goal of life which was considered in the beginning as “the state of Deathlessners” (*Amritattvam*) came to be reckoned later on as “the absence of rebirth” (*Na-punar-janma*). In the beginning the anxiety of the seeker was to end the unavoidable and the most horrid of all experiences called ‘death.’ As knowledge increases, through the right evaluation of the happenings in life, it soon becomes clear to the subjective research-scholars, the Rishis, that death has really no sting at all to those who have understood that it is nothing but one of the different experience in life; death in no way clips off the continuity of existence. Those relentless thinkers have, in the logic of their thoughts, come to the conclusion that birth is the beginning of all pains and, therefore the goal of life, if at all it is possible to achieve, should be “the State of no more Rebirths”.

The dream of rebirth and its destinies belong to the delusory ego, which is nothing but the Unborn Self identifying with its delusory matter envelopments. Electricity conditioned by the bulb is the light; when the bulb gets broken, the light which is an effect, merges with its cause the current, one without a second, everywhere the same, illumining all the bulbs in the world. Similarly, the Self conditioned by a given mind and intellect is the ego (*Jiva*) which suffers the rebirth, the agonies of imperfections; the disease; the decay and the death. The ego comes to rediscover that it is nothing other than the Self, when once the mind-intellect equipment has been stilled.

The one who thus experiences the Self as his own Real Nature, realises that he has never any relationship at all with the equipments of feeling and understanding. Just as an awakened man has no more any relationship with his own dream-wife and children, the ego comes to end its march through the thorny path of pain and finitude, when it gets awakened to the spiritual cognition of the Self. Such great souls will no more have any need to manifest in the plane of plurality to get broken with the repeated lashes of sorrows and miseries lived.

One who has through the process of “*Constant contemplation of the self*”^{*}—and who has during his life time learnt to “control all the senses, regulate the mind and the heart, control and arrest all *pranas* in the intellect—he directly comes to identify himself with the Infinite and the Eternal, and shall no more come back into any limited embodiment to continue his futile search for an infinite satisfaction among the finite world of objects

But are there any who come back not reaching the highest? Listen:

आब्रह्मभुवनल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।

मासुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते । १६ ।

16. a brahmabhuvanl lokaha
punarovartino rjuna
mam upetya tu kaunteya
punarjanma na vidyate

आब्रह्मभुवनान् - up to the world of Brahma, लोकाः :
worlds, पुनरावर्तिनः - subject to return, अर्जुन - O Arjuna,

* Ibid 14.

माम् - to me, उपेत्य - having attained, तु - but, कौन्तेय -
O Kaunteya, पुनर्जन्म - rebirth, न - not, विद्यते - is.

16. Worlds including the world-of-Brahmaji are subject to rebirth, O Arjuna; but he who reaches Me, O Kaunteya, has no rebirth.

It is a characteristic technique often employed by the Teacher in Geeta to bring home his ideas, he expresses them, for purposes of emphasis, against the background of their opposites. Thus, we find here in the verse two contradictory factors put in opposition with each other, so that, each as a contrast to the other may shine out the best in the mental horizon of the students: "*Up to the realm of Brahmaji all are subject to rebirth*". This idea is contrasted with the result of realising directly and totally the Self, the Eternal: "*But, after attaining Me there is no rebirth*".

It is famous in the theory of gradual liberation (*Karma Mukti*) accepted in Vedanta that ritualism (*Kama*) accompanied by meditation (*Upasana*) takes the ego to the Realm of the Creator (*Brahma-loka*) from where at the end of the cycle it merges with the Supreme. Even in Brahmaloika it is necessary that the ego must, through Self-effort, live strictly all the spiritual advices of the Creator, and through constant *Atma-Vichar* come to deserve the total liberation by ending all its connections with ignorance. Thus, it is not all those who reach the Realm of the Creators that come to enjoy the Supreme merger. Some of them will have to, at the end of the Kalpa, come back and take their manifestations in embodiments ordered by their remaining *Vasanas*. This principle is kept in mind when Krishna says that rebirth is to everyone, even to those who have attained the *Brahma-loka*.

But to those who have awakened themselves to the re-discovery of their Essential Eternal Nature and realised themselves to be the One, All-pervading Self—"after attaining Me"—to them, thereafter, there is no return to the plane of the limited existence. To the waker there is no re-admission to the realm where he was when he was dreaming; to awake is to miss for ever the joys and sorrows of that dream which he dreamt. After attaining the waker-hood (Me) there is no return (rebirth) into the dreamland (*Samsar*).

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्षिर्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।

रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ १७ ॥

17. *sahasrayugaparyantam*
ahar yad brahmano viduh
ratrim yugasahasrantam
te horatravido janah

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तम् - Ending in a thousand Yugas (aeons), अहः - day, यत् - which, ब्रह्मणः - of Brahma, विदुः - know, रात्रिम् - the night, युगसहस्रान्ताम् - ending in a thousand Yugas (aeons), ते - they, अहोरात्रविदः knowers of day and night, जनाः - people.

17. Those people who know (the length of) the day-of-Brahma which ends in a thousand Yugas (aeons), and the night which (also) ends in a thousand Yugas (aeons), they know day-and-night.

Einstein's 'Theory of Relativity' has pricked the bubble and it has been accepted even in the West that the concepts of time and space depend upon individual factors

governing the measurements of them Time hangs heavily and moves as a snail when one is in agitation or anxiously waiting for something; while, to the same individual, time flies and takes to its heels when he is quiet at ease with himself, under happy circumstances, pleasant and entertaining. One playing cards knows not when the night is spent and he is surprised when he notices the early dawn peeping through the windows. The same person will complain that each moment has lengthened itself to become hours, when he is at some unpleasant work and in pains. One who is enjoying the homogeneous experience of sleep, to him while he is sleeping there is no concept of time at all.

From the above data, it has been logically concluded in the philosophy of the Hindus that time truly is the measurement of interval between two different experiences. The greater the number of experiences that flood the mind to agitate it the slower the time moves; while longer remains the same experience the faster moves the time. For, in a given single experience there is no perception of time; in one point there is no distance: distances can be measured only between two points. Basing their calculations upon this theory, the *Pouranic* Poets rightly conceived that their Gods have a larger dial for their divine watches. In the Upanishads also we find a scale of relative intensity of Bliss-experience from a mortal, healthy, young man living in conducive environments, upto the very Creator Himself. This ascending scale of joy experienced in the different realms of Consciousness has been found there,* as graphing the relative mental equipoise and tranquillity at those different levels of existence.

In the calculations of Geeta it is said here that a thousand cycles constitute the day-time of the Creator;

* Read Swamiji's "Discourses on Taithiriyopanishad"

and an equally long thousand cycles together constitute the night-time in a single day of the Creator. This declaration of those “*who know the true measure of the day and the night*,” calculated in terms of cycles has been translated in terms of our 365-day years. Each cycle has aeons (*Yugas*)^{1*}. These four aeons together constitute one cycle and a thousand cycles together is conceived of as constituting the day-time of the Creator.

In this and in the following two stanzas the attempt in the Geeta is to point out the Life of the Cosmic Man and his concept of time. To indicate the non-difference between the microcosm (*vyashti*) and macrocosm (*sama-shti*) is the sacred labour in the categories of Vedanta Creator, the God Principle, (*Hiranyagarbha*—the womb of all objects), is a concept which represents the total mind and intellect of all the living creatures living at any given period of time in the world.

Mythology indicates, as any other underdeveloped and, therefore, fanatic religions in the World God as an All-powerful Ruler of the Laws of Nature and a controller of the joys and sorrows of the beings, who functions from “yonder behind the clouds” Vedanta is the only religion in the World which dares to analyse this concept and show that in reality the Essence in this God-Principle is to be investigated and discovered in the subjective construction of the very microcosm (*Vyashti*)

For each to delve into himself and to understand the secret ways of how each mind projects the world of its own objects is to understand not only the Omnipotency and Power, but also the sad limitations upon, God con-

* * The *Satya Yuga* consisting of 1,728,000 years; *Treta Yuga* constituted of 1,296,000 years; the *Dwapara Yuga* having 864,000 years and the *Kali Yuga* of 432,000 years.

ceived as a Creator (*Brahma*), Sustainer (*Vishnu*) and Annihilator (*Maheshwar*). To bring this subtle idea vividly upon the platform of Arjuna's mind, Krishna is giving here these three stanzas* We may say that if Hinduism is the most daring of all religions, that has the courage and guts to translate the Divine into logic and reason, these three stanzas are an easy commentary upon the vast literature available in our sacred lore on this topic.

As the individual units so is the sum-total of the assembly. The individual mind projects creates and sustains—what has been created so long as its fancies are created—and without any regret scrapes the whole lot, only to create again. This constant function does take place in each individual only during the day-time, as representing the waking-state. In the same fashion the Total Mind, the Cosmic Creator—also is conceived of as creating the gross world of dense objects and intelligent beings only during its waking hours.

How?

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।

रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ १८ ॥

18. *avyaktad vyaktayah sarvah*
prabhavanty aharagame
ratryagame praliyante
tatrai va vyaktasamjñake

अव्यक्तात् - From the unmanifested, व्यक्तयः - the manifested, सर्वाः - all, प्रभवन्ति - proceed, अहरागमे

* Ibid 17, 18, and 19

at the coming of day, रात्रागमे - at (रात्र्यागत्र) the coming of night, प्रलीयन्ते - dissolve, तत्र - there, एव - verily, अव्यक्तसंज्ञके - in that which is called the unmanifested.

18. From the unmanifested all the manifested proceed at the coming of the day; at the coming of night they dissolve verily in that alone which is called the unmanifested.

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।

रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थप्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९ ॥

19. *bhutagramah sah eva yam
bhutva-bhutva praliyate
ratryagame vasah partha
prabhavaty aharagame*

भूतग्रामः - Multitude of beings, सः - that, एव verily, अयम् - this, भूत्वा भूत्वा - being born again and again, प्रलीयते - dissolves, रात्र्यागमे - at the coming of night, अवशः - helpless, पार्थ - O Partha (son of Pri-
tha), प्रभवति - comes forth, अहरागमे - at the coming of day.

19. This same multitude of beings is being born again and again, and is dissolved, (into the unmanifested) helplessly, O Partha, at the coming of night, and it comes forth again at the coming of day.

In these two stanzas an explanation is given on how the Creator employs Himself, during His day, which is a thousand aeons long. and during his night, which also is

an equally long interval. It is also here added, that the Créator creates during the day, and the entire created world at the approach of His night merges into 'the unmanifested' (*Avyaktham*).

In the wordly sense of the term: 'creation' is generally understood as the production of something new. Philosophically viewed, 'creation' has a subtler significance and a more intimate meaning. A pot-maker can 'create' pots out of mud, but he cannot 'create' Laddus out of the same mud. The act of 'creation' is only the production of a name and form with some specific qualities, out of a raw-material in which the same name, form and qualities are already existing in an unmanifested condition. The potness was in the mud while the Laddu-qualities were not therein, and, therefore, a pot can be 'created' from a given sample of mud but not even a tiny bit of Laddu. It is, hence, concluded by the thinkers in Vedanta that "creation is but a crystallisation of the unmanifested dormant names, form and qualities into their manifested forms of existence."

When a philosophy is sans this exhaustive definition of the term 'creation', that philosophy brings about among the students confusions regarding the theory of creation which it propounds. In many of the hasty religions of the world—wherein its single prophet is not even given the fair chance to preach his entire creed along with his entire philosophy, exhaustively—their theory of creation is an intellectual paradox and cannot stand the scrutiny of even a few moments' reasonable investigation.

Anyone living as he does at any given day is but the product of the numerous yesterdays that he had lived in his intellectual thoughts, his emotional feelings and his physical actions. The actions of the past, supported by the thoughts entertained and the valuations accepted by

him, leave a distinct flavour upon his mind and intellect, and the future thoughts and their flow are controlled and directed by the previously made thought-channels.

Just as there is consistency of species in procreation, there is a consistency noticeable in multiplication of thoughts. Just as frogs breed frogs and men breed men, or mango-seeds germinate and grow to put forth mangos, so too, good thoughts creating good thought-currents can multiply only into a flood of good thoughts. These thought-impressions in the mind (*Vasanas*), that lie unmanifest to our sense-organs and often to our own mental and intellectual perceptions, become manifested as gross actions, thoughts and words, making our path of life either smooth or rough, according to the texture and quality of the thoughts manifested.

Supposing, a doctor, an advocate, a devotee and a dacoit are all sleeping in a rest-house. While sleeping, all of them look the same: masses of flesh and bones, breathing and warm. The advocate is no way different from the dacoit, nor is the doctor different from the devotee. The specific qualities in each bosom at this moment, though totally absent from observation are not non-existent but they remain in a condition of dormancy.

These un-manifested temperaments, capacities, inclinations and tendencies come to project forth and manifest when they wake up, and once they leave the rest-house, each will be pursuing his own peculiar thought-tendencies. In the rest-house, we can consider the doctor, advocate, devotee and the dacoit, all in the unmanifested state (*Pralaya*), while they were asleep, and at dawn when they wake up, these four different specimens become projected forth into manifestation, which is otherwise called, in the language of Religion and Philosophy, as 'creation'.

With this correct perspective of the process of creation in our minds, it would be certainly easy for us to understand the cosmic processes of creation and dissolution. The Creator, or the Total-mind, during his waking hours of thousand aeons, projects out the already existing *vasanas*, and “*at the approach of night, they merge verily into that alone, which is called the ‘unmanifested’*”

It is insisted here by Lord Krishna, that “*the very same multitude of beings are born again and again and merge in spite of themselves.*” Subjectively, this declaration provides us with a clearer understanding of how man becomes enslaved to his own thoughts and emotions. It is never possible that an animal-man pursuing consistently the life of sensuality, perpetrating unkind cruelties in order to satisfy his passions, overnight wakes up to be a gracious man of all perfections. However great his teacher may be, however divine the occasions may be and whatever be the sanctity of the place or the time.

No teacher can or shall ever touch his disciple and transform him instantaneously to a divine preacher, unless, of course, the student had the divine tendencies lying dormant and ready for manifestation in him. The moment anybody argues that even a rare instance of at least one great soul had been transformed in the past, by one unique teacher, then there must have been equally some unique instance of some magician producing a *Laddu* out of mud. If in the latter case, we know, that it is only a magic and the *Laddu* was not produced from the mud, intelligent people, with some vague understanding of the Science of Life, and who have at least a little share of respect and devotion to the Prophet of the Geeta, will hoot down such a fantastic story. Such a story can be accepted only in a mood of poetic exaggeration used by the disciples in praise of their teacher.

"*The very same multitude of beings,*" meaning the very same bundle of thought-impressions—an individual being nothing other than the thoughts that he entertains—arrives at different fields of activity and states of Consciousness in order to exhaust itself. "*In spite of themselves*" (*Avasaha*), is a powerful expression indicating the incapacity of an individual to disinherit himself from his past. The past always faithfully follows us like our shadow—darkening our path when we are turning our back to the Light of Knowledge, and accompanying us submissively at our heels like a guardian angel when we turn towards the effulgent Self and wend our way towards it.

On leaving a physical embodiment the mind-intellect-equipment continues its existence just the same way as an actor when he drops down the apparels of the king at the close of the play continues to exist in his individual capacity as the father of his children, the husband of his wife, etc. The taking up of a physical structure and singing the song of one's mental *vasanas* in the form of actions is called the 'creation', and when the equipment is thrown asunder, the thoughts and ideas having no equipment to express themselves become the unmanifested. A fiddler playing at the fiddle makes the music in him manifested, and when the fiddle is kept away in its box, the music in the individual becomes unmanifested.

This 'realm of the unmanifested' in each bosom undergoes constant change, whenever it comes in contact with the world of manifestation and react with it. We have already known how change cannot take place unless it is upon a changeless substratum.

Upon what permanent platform does the unmanifested come to play its drama of life?

SREEMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA

परस्तस्मात्तुभावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।

यःस सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ २० ॥

20. *Paras tasmāt tu bhavo nyo
vyakto vyaktat sanatanah
yah sa sarvesu bhutesu
nasyatsu na vinasyati*

परः - Higher, तस्मात् - than that, तु - but, भावः -
existence, अन्यः - another, अव्यक्तः - unmanifested,
अव्यक्तात् - than the unmanifested, सनातनः - Eternal, यः -
who, सः - that, सर्वेषु - in all, भूतेषु - in beings, नश्यत्सु -
in beings destroyed, न - not, विनश्यति - is destroyed.

20. But verily there exists, higher than that unmanifested
(*Avyakta*), another Unmanifest, (which is) Eternal,
which is not destroyed when all beings are
destroyed.

The same black-board is approached by different teachers to explain different subjects, during a single day in any class-room. The arithmetic teacher's geometrical figures and calculations are wiped clean by the geography teacher to design therein his maps of the world and to trace the path of rivers, the location of the lakes and the position of the mountains. When the chemistry teacher arrives, he rubs off

the entire world of mountains, rivers and oceans represented on the black-board, and he, in his turn, represents thereon the laws of chemical reactions between the various elements and compounds among themselves and with others. It now is left for the history teacher to make the black-board clean again and to re-fill it with the family-trees of dynasties destroyed and the families forgotten. Each teacher comes and marks out on the black-board different designs which represent the design of knowledge that each teacher has in his bosom. But all of them were chalked out and executed on the same changeless black-board, which illumines the mathematical calculations, the geographical data, the chemical formulae, and the historical facts, in turn.

Similarly, the changing world of the unmanifested must all have one Changeless Substratum "*that which is not destroyed by the destruction of all beings (bhoothas)*". When in the evening the students and teachers have left the classroom the black-board still remains. This principle of Pure-Consciousness, Itself unmanifest—inasmuch as it is not perceivable by the sense-organs or comprehensible by the mind and intellect—is indicated here when Lord declares "*beyond this unmanifested, there is the other Eternal Existence, the Unmanifest*"

The unmanifested (*vasanas*) are the seeds of the manifested and they constitute, what Vedanta indicates by its very familiar term Ignorance (*Avidya*). Ignorance can be only of an existent something; I cannot be ignorant of my tail, since I have not got a tail. That which is Truth, the ignorance of which generates the *Avidya* in me, which in its turn projects out the manifested, is the factor that should be the Changeless board, the Permanent Substratum, for all other conditioned-knowledges to be scribbled on. The Ultimate Reality, the Self, is being indicated here as something that lies beyond the hazy frontiers of delusory experiences of creation, dissolution and repeated re-creations, on and again.

Is this Unmanifest then the Supreme? Or, is there yet another factor which alone is fit to be the goal of life?

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्माहुः परमां गतिम् ।

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ २१ ॥

21. *avyakto ksara ity uktas
tam ahuḥ paramam gatim
yam prapya na nivartante
tad dhama paramam mama*

अव्यक्तः - Unmanifested, अक्षरः - imperishable, इति - thus, उक्तः - called, तम् - that, आहुः - (they) say, परमाम् - the highest, गतिम् - goal, (path), यम् - which, प्राप्य - having reached, न - not, निवर्तन्ते - return, तद् - that, धाम - abode (place or state), परमम् - highest, मम - my,

21. What is called the Unmanifest and the Imperishable, that, they say is the highest goal (path). They who reach It never again return. That is My highest abode (state).

What has been indicated in the previous stanza as “*the other Unmanifest-which is the Eternal Existence-which knows no destruction*” is explained here as the Imperishable mentioned earlier in the chapter *. The Imperishable was defined therein as the Brahman, the Substratum for the entire Universe, and we were also advised there that we must meditate upon OM as the symbol of this Imperishable. The Self which is of the nature of Pure Awareness is that which lends existence and dynamism to the unmanifested *vasanas*, and makes them capable of projecting out to form the manifested world

* I bid 3 and 13

of activities and behaviours. This Eternal Unmanifested Factor, the Imperishable Self, is the highest goal for man to achieve.

In all other states of existence, there is again and again the experience of return **. Just as sleep is not the end of life, but only a refreshing pause between spans of activity, so too death is not an end, but often, only a restful pause in the unmanifested condition that comes between two successive manifested existence in different embodiments. It was already indicated that even from the *Brahma-loka*, the ego-centres will have to return to exhaust their unmanifested cravings, the *vasanas*. Birth, we have been already told is "a house of pain and finitude", and, therefore complete satisfaction, which alone can be a satisfying goal of life, can be reached only when there is no rebirth—no return.

Often, educated students of the present generation ask, "why should there not be a return?" The question though natural, cannot stand even a moment's scrutiny. Generally cause-hunting is on things that happen and not on things that do not happen. Nobody anxiously enquires why I am not in a hospital, when I am healthy, but an intelligent enquirer has every right to enquire why I have gone to the hospital, when I am healthy. We may enquire why the Infinite has become the finite; the question does not arise at all why the Infinite should not fall again into the finite. This question is as absurd as my enquiring why you are not yet in the jail? For not going to the jail, no cause-hunting is necessary. And if you have actually gone to jail, there is certainly a justification to ask and enquire what is the exact crime for which you have been sent to jail!!

We can never explain to a little girl and make her understand what are the physical and emotional thrills of the

* * Samsaratiti-Samsar --- the whirl of birth and death, the shuttle between the unmanifested and the manifested, is life as we know it now.

married¹ life; in her child-hood she has not the vehicle of comprehending the biological thrill of the sex-life. And, as the same girl grows in her maturity, she develops in herself the biological antennae to feel and mentally comprehend the very same thrills which were to her but empty suggestions in her early childhood- - -when, all she wanted was that her mother should marry her ! In the same fashion, a seeker who lies burrowed in the dung-heap of his mind and intellect, cannot in its filthy atmosphere, know the vast embrace of the horizon and the glorious fragrance of the fresh breeze. As the seeker detaches himself from his false identifications, through the process of meditation advised *, he, as it were, gets himself hatched out of his limiting adjuncts, and comes to enter into the vaster fields of the subtler experiences. On waking up alone can one realise the falsehood of one's dreams: the dreamer can never, so long as he dreams, realise the delusion in which he is suffering. Having awakened from a dream, the waker cannot be pursued by his dream-sorrows and his dream-happenings.

The Self or Pure Consciousness is poetically described here by Vyasa as the dwelling place of Krishna, "*that is highest dwelling-place.*" In Geeta, the Singer of the Song Divine, is the Self, and as such the highest goal is to reach the State² of Pure Consciousness, the Imperishable, which is available for the experience as the Self, has been already described at length* while the teacher was indicating the nature of Knowledge gained by one who attains the state of the Divine *Purusha*.

What is the direct path by which this consummate goal can be reached is explained in the following.

* Ibid 12, 13 and 14

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।

यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ २२ ॥

22. *Purusah sa parah partha
bhaktya labhyas tv ananyaya
yasya ntahsthani bhutani
yena sarvam idam tatam*

पुरुषः - Purusha, सः - that, परः - highest, O - पार्थ Partha, भक्त्या - by devotion, लभ्यः - is attainable, तु - verily, अनन्यया-without another object (unswerving), यस्य - of whom, अन्तःस्थानि - dwelling within, भूतानि - beings, येन - by whom, सर्वम् - all, इदम् - this, ततम् - pervaded.

22. That Highest Purusha, O Partha, is attainable by unswerving devotion to Him alone, within whom all beings dwell, by whom all this is pervaded.

A goal of life, which has an existence only in the poetic conception of the philosopher, will never be considered as a goal to be gained, by the practical minded Indian seekers. A vague indication that after death the departed souls hang on in a region of nowhere, until the Day of Judgment, etc., can enchant not those who have a scientific bent of mind, and such a philosophy can be insisted upon only when the faithful are discouraged to make use of their own thinking faculties. Blind faith alone can feed the followers of such a creed jailed in the iron-doors of its scriptural statements.

Here Krishna, the Prophet of the Hindus, vividly chalks out the technique and the path by which "*what has been called the Unmanifest, the Imperishable,—that Supreme Purusha is attainable*". Single-pointed devotion is the way and the means. Devotion—total selfless identification—to the Supreme Purusha can be achieved only when the devotee has learnt to dissociate himself from all his preoccupations with his world of body, mind and intellect. This detachment from the false is gained in a growing attachment with the Real, the Permanent. An act of inspired seeking, for identifying oneself totally with the experience of '*Self I am*' is, the "*whole-souled devotion to Him alone*" that is mentioned in this line.

The Self, thus identified, by the seeker in his meditation as himself, should not be conceived of as merely the Divine Spark that presides over his own individual matter envelopments. Though the seeking is subjective, on identifying with the Self, in the final experience, it is to be realised as the very Substratum of the entire universe. Implying this oneness of the Self with the Truth behind the entire world of phenomenon, Bhagavan says, as an indication of the nature of the *Purusha*, "*in whom all beings abide and by whom all this is pervaded*".

All mud-pots exist in the mud, and the mud pervades all mud-pots irrespective of their shape, size or colour. Whether it be a breaker or a wave or a wave-let, all are nothing but the ocean, and the ocean pervades all of them. Within and without, the substance of all pots is the substance with which they are made; the Essential Nature of all the waves, big, small or tiny, is nothing other than the ocean from which they are born.

Pure Awareness is the Eternal Truth in which the unmanifested comes to be projected forth as the manifested. But for the cotton, the weaver's unmanifested conception of beauty and proportion cannot be projected out, and

spread through his creative art of weaving a design of the cloth he is making. At all points in that design of cloth, the one factor without which the design cannot stand is the substance of the threads in the cloth—the cotton.

Pure awareness, poured into the moulds of *Vasanas* when frozen with ignorance, becomes the multiple worlds of names and forms : recognised, craved for, and struggled to acquire and to possess—everywhere by everyone. Therefore, one who has identified himself with the Self, in that vivid experience, he comes to understand the very Essence out of which the confusing multiplicity has risen up into manifestation, to confound the stupid ego and to labour it with the delusory dream of its *samsar* !

After enumerating the two distinct ways of procedure to go back from the manifest to the unmanifest, in the following, Krishna devotes an entire section to explain the routes taken by each to reach its different destination. Some reach a destination where there is a return and others attain a level of experience from which there is no return.

What are the two Paths ?

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।

प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३ ॥

23. *yatra kale tv anavrttim
avrttim cai va yoginah
prayata yanti tam kalam
vaksyami bharatarsabha*

यत्र - Where, काले - in time, तु - verily, अनावृत्तिम् - non-return, आवृत्तिम् - return, च - and, एव - even, योगिनः - Yogis, प्रयाताः - departing, यान्ति - go to, तम् - that,

कालम् - time. वक्ष्यामि - (I) will tell, भरतर्षभ - O chief of Bharatas.

23. Now at what time (path) departing, Yogins go never to return, as also to return, that time (path), I will tell you, O Chief of Bharatas.

The Lord has already explained that there are two goals in life which men seek : the extrovert life of satisfying the ego and gaining its flickering joys among the sense-objects, each of which experience soon sours itself to sorrow ; and the Divine Mission of seeking the Imperishable by ending the ego in a re-discovery of its own Real Nature as nothing other than the Eternal Conciousness, the Changeless Substratum of the whole Universe.

These two goals, it has been indicated, differ from each other inasmuch as the former encourages a return again to a finite embodiment, to live the consequent ego-centric life of limitations, and the latter promises a goal, having reached which, there is no return. The realised one comes to experience and enjoy the Infinite Beatitude of the Bliss Absolute as his own Real Self.

If thus there are two goals to be gained, there must necessarily be two different paths guiding the respective types to their right destinations. In the stanza under review, the Lord promises that he will explain to "the Chief of the Bharata family", both, the "Path of Return" and the "Path of no Return".

: There is a pun on the word 'Kale' used here ; it shows both the *time* of departure and the *path* pursued by the different types of seekers at the end of their present manifestations.

The path pursued by those who have no return is as follows :

अग्निज्योतिरहः शुक्रः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ २४ ॥

24. *agnir jyotir ahah suklah
sanmasa uttarayanam
tatra prayata gacchanti
brahma brahmavido jarah*

अग्निः - Fire, ज्योतिः - light, अहः - day, शुक्रः - the bright fortnight, षण्मासाः - six months, उत्तरायणम् - the northern path of the sun, तत्र-there, प्रयाताः -departed, गच्छन्ति - go, ब्रह्म - to Brahman, ब्रह्मविदः - Brahman knowing, जनाः - people.

24. Fire, light, day-time, the bright fortnight, the six-months of the northern solstice following this Path, men who know Brahman go to Brahman.

This and the following stanzas have been commented upon very differently by different commentators, and some, in their utter despair, have even wrongly judged these passages as extremely obscure. This passage makes use of the mystic language of the Upanishads and everyone, except those who have made a thorough and deep study of the Upanishads, is apt to despair in not finding any sense in them. But we should not forget that Geeta is "the milk collected from the Upanishadic cows"*

Here, in the stanza, the path of "gradual-liberation" (*Krama-mukthi*) is explained. According to the Upanishadic tradition, "he who has lived a life of rituals, (*Karmas*), and worship, (*Upasana*), to enjoy the result accrued, he will be walking the Path of the Gods (*Devayana*) and entering

*"Sarvopanishadow-gavo dogdha....."

through the sun will go beyond it to the *Brahmaloka* " There he enjoys the super-sensuous Bliss till the end of the cycle, when, along with the Creator, he gets the total liberation. This Path of the Gods, is indicated here by the terms borrowed from the Upanishads which have a wealth of suggestiveness to all students of the Rishi-declarations. *

"Fire, flame, day-time, the bright fort-night, the six months of the northern solstice of the sun"—These indicate the 'Path of the Gods' presided over by the Sun, while the 'Path of the Ancestors' will be described in the following verse where we shall find that it is presided over by the Moon. In the *Prasnopanishad* this has been very vividly brought out when that Upanishad supplies the students with a theory of the creation of the multiplicity from the one Great Truth. It was explained that *Prajapathi*, the Creator, himself became the Sun and the Moon, where these two phenomenal objects are mentioned as representing energy and matter. **

Identifying with the Dynamic Centre in himself a seeker tries to live the life. Such an *Upasaka* of the Truth, at the time, of his departure from his present manifestation in the world, comes to think of the object of his contemplation of his whole life-time, and naturally, he goes to the world of his thoughts — "as you think so you become". By entertaining the evolutionary thoughts in one's mind, all through one's life, one must, after leaving the present embodiment, walk the ascending path of evolution, the Path of the Gods, indicated here as the Path of "*Light and fire, day-time, the bright-fortnight, the northern solstice of the Sun.*" Thus, in the mystical language of the Upanishads the path pursued by

There is a description of these two Paths mentioned here in the *Bramahsutras* formulated by the Author of the *Geeta*, as well as in the *Chandogya*, *Brihadaranyaka*, *Prasna*, and *Kathopanishads*. In the *Bramasutra* read IV. ii. 17 & 20.

* * For elaborate explanation, read Sramiji's "Discourses on the *Prasnopanishad*".

those who are great devotees of the Brahman, the Eternal, is described as stretching in the direction of the North. These implications are all epitomised and the Upanishadic Rishis often use the term “ Northern Route ” to indicate the Path of Gradual Liberation.

As contrasted with this Path of No-Return is the Path of Sure-Return which is explained in the following :

धूमो रात्रिस्तथाकृष्णः ष मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।

तत्र चान्द्रमसंज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

25. *dhumo ratris tatha krsnah
sanmasa daksinayanam
tatra candramasam jyotir
yogi prapya nivartate*

धूमः - Smoke, रात्रिः night, तथा - also, कृष्णः - the dark (fortnight), षण्मासाः - the six months, दक्षिणायनम् - the southern path of the sun, तत्र - there, चान्द्रमसम् - lunar, ज्योतिः - light, योगी - the Yogi, प्राप्य - having attained, निवर्तते - returns.

25. Smoke, night-time, the dark-fortnight, also the six months of the southern solstice attaining by these to the Moon, the lunar light, the Yogi returns.

The path of Return, called the “Path of the Ancestors” (*Pitr-yana*), is considered as presided over by the Moon, which indicates, the world of matter. *Those who are leaving, the world after spending their life-time in doing good and performing rituals (*karmas*) unaccompanied by any worship (*upasana*), are those who go to the World of the Ancestors, (*Pitrus*), or otherwise popularly known as the Heavens. These

*Read Swamiji's “Discourses on Prasnopanishad”

denizens of the Heavens, on having exhausted their merits, gained by them through their divine actions, will have to return into desired embodiments ordered by their individual *Vasana*-balance that are ardently pressing for expression and fulfilment.

“Smoke, night-time, the dark-fortnight, the six months of the Southern Solstice”—These indications chalk out the Path through the moon (*Pitr-yana*), to the world of the ancestors. The moon as we said represents the world of matter, and is the presiding deity of the sense enjoyments. Such people do return after having attained, through the grace of the Moon, the Heavenly enjoyments for an interval.

In short, these two stanzas indicate that in his life-time a seeker is struggling to raise himself above the various matter-envelopments and his identifications with them, he reaches the higher spiritual realms from where, in the stream of his spiritual progress, he reaches the Ultimate. But in case, he be a courtier of pleasure, singing ever at the temple of sensuality, then he falls, on to the Path of realising those developed instincts, and comes back again into the field of action—here—wherein he can again make or unmake himself.

In conclusion Krishna adds:

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।

एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ २६ ॥

26. *Suklaksne gati hy ete
jagatah sasvate mate
ekaya yaty anavrttim
anyaya vartate punah*

शुद्धदृष्टे - Bright and dark, गती - (two) paths, हि - verily, एते - these, जगतः - of the world, शाश्वते - eternal, मते - are thought, एकया - by one, याति - (he) goes, अनावृत्तिम् - to non-return, अन्यया - by another, आवर्तते (he) returns, पुनः - again.

26. The path of Light and the Path of Darkness available for the world are verily thought to be both eternal; by the one, the Path of Light, a man goes to return not; by the other, the Path of Darkness, he returns again.

The two paths described so vividly above are re-named here as the 'Path of Light' and as the 'Path of Darkness', according to the goal to which each path guides the pilgrims on it. One takes the travellers to the brilliant heights of evolutionary success; the other into the dark abyss of devolutionary sorrow. These two paths described here, in their general implications, can be considered as showing the Path of *Samsar* and the Path of *Moksha*.

The ways of life in any given generation fall always under two categories : the secular and the sacred. The former, the secular, is pursued by those who feel that food, clothing and shelter are the only absolutes and the fulfilment of life is the satisfaction of the largest number of physical and emotional sense-ticklings; and whose intellects are cold and satisfied, feeling no urge to seek for anything nobler and diviner. The latter, the sacred, however, is pursued by those who can feel no encouraging each in their bosom, when the sense-objects higgle and dance in front of their sense-organs, and whose intellects are ever on fire with a great seeking of something beyond, something deeper than the mere surface existence in life.

These two paths—which mean not only the two impulses of the sacred and the secular, but also all those who follow these two paths: the seekers of materialism and the seekers of spiritualism—“*are to be considered as truly Eternal*”. In the largest sense of the term, these two impulses together constitute the entire *Samsar*, and since, the world of finitude and change is eternal, these two contrary impulses are also eternal. But it is, the Vedantic theory, approved and upheld by the lived experiences of the Seers and Sages that *Samsar* can be ended for the individual.

Subjectively considered, this stanza may have, perhaps, a secret suggestion to make to the true *Yogis*: meaning the sincere meditators. Even in an elderly *Sadhak*, who has been on the path for years, the existing sub-conscious *Vasanas* in him may now and then come up to insist upon his extrovertedness. At such moments of inner revolt in us, we, as seekers and meditators, need not at all get flabbergasted because, as Lord explains, the aspirations for the higher life, and the temptations for the lower existence, are the two opposing forces that are eternally at tug-of-war with each other.

What exactly is the gain in knowing these two paths, and their eternal nature ?

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ २७ ॥

27. *nai te srti partha janan*
yogi muhyati kascana
tastmat sarvesu kalesu
yogayukto bhava rjuna

न - Not, एते - these, सृती - two paths, पार्थ O -
Pārthā, जानन् - knowing, योगी - the Yogi, मुह्यति - is.

deluded, कश्चन - anyone, तस्मान्न - therefore, सर्वेषु - in all, कालेषु - times, योगयुतः - steadfast in Yoga, भव - be (thou), अर्जुन - O Arjuna.

27. Knowing these paths, O Partha, no Yogin is deluded ; therefore, at all times be steadfast in Yoga, O Arjuna.

After knowing that the Path of Light and the Path of Darkness are the two opposing forces that function in our mental life eternally, a true seeker will not fall into any sense of despair, when he watches in himself such a revolt raising in his bosom. *"No Yogi is deluded after knowing these paths"*.

The entire line of argument pursued by Krishna, is to reveal slowly and steadily the 'Path of Return' and the 'Path of No-Return' and now in this penultimate stanza of this chapter, he summarises his theme and purpose, and says *"therefore, Arjuna, you be a Yogi at all times"*. Here, one who has withdrawn himself from his false-identifications and has come to fix his single pointed mind in the contemplation of the Self, is the Yogi.

In short, the entire chapter is a divinely powerful plea recommending that Arjuna should, even while acting in the world, continuously strive to be one living in the awareness of the Divine, through a process of Self-less identification with the Eternal, Imperishable *Purusha*.

By mere meditation how will we gain the specific merits that are promised by the Sruti and the Smriti when we follow certain noble actions in life?

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव
 दानेषु यत् पुण्यफलं विद्विष्टम् ।
 अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा
 योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥ २८ ॥

28. *Vedesu yaejnsu tapahsu cai va
 danesu yat punyaphalam pradistam
 astyeti tat sarvam idam viditva
 yogi param sthanam upaiti ca dyam*

वेदेषु - In the Vedas, यज्ञेषु - in sacrifices, तपःसु - in austerities, च - and, एव - also, दानेषु - in gifts, यत् - whatever, पुण्यफलम् - fruit of merit, विद्विष्टम् - is declared, अत्येति - goes beyond, तत् - that, सर्वम् - all, इदम् - this, विदित्वा - having known, योगी - the Yogi, (the mediator), परम् - Supreme, स्थानम् - abode, उपैति - attains, च - and, आद्यम् - primaeval.

28. Whatever fruit of merit is declared (in the scriptures) spring up from the study of the Vedas, the performance of sacrifices, the practice of austerities and charity—beyond all these goes the Yogin, having known this (the two paths) attains to the Supreme Primaeval (Essence).

The Upanishadic literature, the *Brahmana*-portion of the Vedas, and the *Smṛiti* branch of our sacred scriptures,—each one of them insists and prescribes some type of sacred activity or other, that should be undertaken by every seeker of the divine. Everywhere, the prescription for each specified sacred activity is followed by exaggerated promises of some terrestrial and some celestial results. Arjuna was a well-read student of the *Vedas*. He was one who had been fatly fed by

the cream of the *Karmakanda* in his early boyhood, and as such, Krishna suddenly remembers, as it were, that the Pandava-prince must yet have a lingering doubt that through pure meditation all the benefits promised by these sacred actions will not be achieved by the Yogi on the path of meditation.

This is no exaggeration ; even now there are among us a majority of pundits who dread the Path of Meditation and glorify their fear by the seeming excuses that without *Karma* and *Upasana* meditation can never be undertaken successfully. Sacred actions and worship of the deity, no doubt we know, when performed and undertaken in a spirit of selfless dedication and true devotion, purify the inner equipment (*Anthahkarana-suddhi*), integrate the personality, and lend a greater equipoise to the meditator at his seat of meditation, so that he can easily take off on the wings of his mind and intellect to the land of the Imperishable *Purusha*.

Here, we can consider Krishna as meaning that meditation can be undertaken by anyone who is even slightly capable of it; because, the Lord explains “*whatever meritorious results are promised in the scriptures to accrue from the study of the Vedas, performance of the Yagus, practice of austerities and selfless charity*”, a true Yogi, meaning—a sincere meditator—gains them. Besides, the Lord is emphatic when He says—“*the Yogi rises even above all these.*” Attempts at meditation can integrate the personality a million times more easily and quickly than by slower processes described above—of course, only if the devoted meditator has developed in himself the necessary amount of dispassion and discriminative thinking. Even these can grow when meditation is pursued regularly and sincerely.

A meditator who has through meditation thus gained the results of selfless *Karma* and *Upasanas*, when he continues his practices he learns to soar higher and higher, until at last he comes to realise “*this*”, the Imperishable *Purusha*, and “*attains to the primæval, Supreme Abode*”—having attained which, My highest state, there is no return.”

ओं तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अक्षरब्रह्मयोगो नामाष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥ २९ ॥

29. *Ity' srimad bhagavadgitasupanisatsu
brahmavidyayam yogasastre sri
Krsnarjunasamvade Aksara
Brahmayogo nama
astamo dhyayah*

29. Thus, in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Geeta, in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture of Yoga, in the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the discourse ends entitled :
THE YOGA OF IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN

Here the term “*Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman*” is to be understood as “*the way to the Imperishable Brahman*”. After describing in this chapter the questions raised by Arjuna, the Lord was borne away on the high tides of his divine inspiration, to explain how those who can remember the Infinite at the time of their departure from the body will reach the Infinite. Therefore, He advised Arjuna to remember the Infinite always and face his life diligently.

Naturally, Krishna has to explain what is the nature of that Infinite upon which the seeker is to fix his single-pointed mind. We had thus in stanzas 9 and 10 a set of brilliant phrases, which, in their suggestiveness, explained the Inexplicable. Having described the Imperishable Brahman, the Singer of the Geeta explains the Path of Light and the

path of darkness, the former leading to the Imperishable and the latter abducting the ego away from its divine home into the "house of pain and finitude". Rightly indeed has the chapter been captioned as "the Way to the Imperishable Brahman".

For the rest of the terms in the *Sankalpa Vakya*, please refer the extensive treatment given under Chapters I and II.

SREEMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA

CHAPTER IX

INTRODUCTION

Srimad Bhagavad Geeta, as a text-book of Hindu renaissance, has necessarily to carry with it the seeds of thorough reformation, almost revolutionary in its onslaught. The fundamental principles remaining the same, a religion that keeps pace with life has to readjust itself to accommodate current social problems and political conditions. Religion was not extinct in the era of the Mahabharata. But the Vedic principles needed a re-adjustment and a re-affirmation in the context of the life available in that era. Vyasa's mouthpiece, Lord Krishna, is the most brilliant organ that sang a song of progress to the new era throbbing with its cultural revolt.

When the fundamentals forming the foundation are to be kept sacredly the same, the only adjustment that is possible for the expansion of a science of life, is to discover a more liberal means for its application, and to annotate the same in language of the conflict and struggle available in that period. Blind faith can have a compelling charm only in the early ages of a people, and when they grow stalwart in their reason, and almost muscular in their emotions, the impetuosity of the generation can no more be tamed and kept in bounds by the sandy beaches of barren faith. They demand and expect walls of unshakable logic and reason to support the stream of assertions in the philosophy of their thinkers. To a large extent, an interpreter of a philosophy—not the philosopher—will have to dance to the rhythm of the inundations of the land and the direction of the current of thought and life in his age.

This new interpretation, at once intelligent and meaningful, has, no doubt, injected a new vigour and brought fresh blood into the senile values of life and their ineffectual application in the society. Such repeated transfusions of youthfulness and vitality into the dilapidated body of the religion had sustained the ageless tradition of the Hindus through its chequered career down the aisles of Time. One of the most powerful rejuvenation treatments that the immortal lore received in recent times is from the hands of Vyasa, and Bhagavad Geeta reports that operation divine.

From chapter seven on, we notice how Krishna gathers a growing courage of assertion in his expressions, and how he is no more struggling to veil his new religion, as he has done almost upto chapter six. In chapter seven we find how the Champion of the Revolt throws his gloves down when he said, "I shall tell you the full knowledge, speculative and practical," and thereafter, Krishna has been pursuing the theme of spiritual practices, as if he is a mathematician solving his problem, stage by stage, for the benefit of his students. Nowhere has he insisted upon any blind faith in what he says. On the other hand, at every stage he has been scrupulously careful to supply the necessary data and the rational arguments for the why and the whereof of the Vedantic beliefs, and in the ways of self-perfection advocated by Vedanta.

The same tempo of ruthless intellectual estimation is being continued even in chapter nine and its very opening stanza promises that the Lord will be giving, during his discourse, not only the theory of self-perfection, but also the intellectual science behind it all. It is very clear, if sympathetically noticed, that the kind teacher in Krishna is carefully avoiding the vague and mystic technical terms, already then in use in the Vedantic literature, except for the most elementary.

Ideas have been simplified here so that they can be easily grasped by Arjuna, the representative of the ordinary educated

men of his time. However, the same principles will be found to be explained again in a later chapter * under the orthodox terminology of Vedanta as *Kshetra*, *Kshetragyna*, *Gyana*, *Gyeya*, *Purusha*, *Prakriti*, etc.

“Dividing a subject of enquiry into its main divisions : analytical explanation of the divisions ; categorical treatment of the subjects under each division ; discussion of the relation between all the parts and setting down the conclusions drawn therefrom—” this would in our days be considered as the proper scientific method for the treatment of a subject. In this sense of the term, Geeta is not at all scientific. But, at the same time, the conversational style of the Geeta has its own characteristic clarity and *Sastraic* precision. Krishna himself calls it “the most Secret Science”. To every careful student of the Geeta, it will be clear that in its scientific outlook and systematic explanations the discourses leave nothing to be desired.

*Chapter XIII.

SRI BHAGAVAN UVACA

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वामोक्ष्यसे अशुभात् ॥ १ ॥

1. *idam tu te guhyatamam*
pravakshyamy anasuyave
jnanam vijñanasहितam
yaj jnatva mokshyase subhat

इदम् - This, तु - indeed, ते - to thee, गुह्यतमम् - greatest secret, प्रवक्ष्यामि - (I) shall declare. अनसूयवे - to one who does not cavil ज्ञानम् - knowledge, विज्ञानसहितम् - combined with experience, यत् - which, ज्ञात्वा - having known, मोक्ष्यसे - you shall be free. अशुभात् - from evil.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID :

1. To thee who does not cavil, I shall now declare this the greatest secret, the most profound knowledge combined with experience (or realisation) ; which having known you shall be free from the sorrows of life.

In this very opening stanza, Krishna promises that he will be discoursing herein, "the most profound knowledge along with its realisation", because Arjuna is one who is fit for this sacred confidence. In the early days of a revolt there is a compelling necessity for keeping a certain amount of secrecy regarding the philosophy of the revolution.

Arjuna had been found fit to share this secret knowledge because, conversion into a new way-of-thinking, is impossible only to those who have a tendency to carp at the new philosophy. Those who catch at small faults and errors, or who try to make trifling objections and raise false arguments against a philosophy, can never come to judge or evaluate that philosophy rightly, much less become enthusiastic followers of that way of life.

Lord Krishna has discovered Arjuna as one who is really anxious to evolve. Only, he wanted help from some quarter to discover in himself an intellectual conviction for the way-of-life he is to pursue. The Lord says that he will declare the new philosophy to Arjuna, *"who does not carp or cavil"*. and the benefit of this knowledge, along with its practical application has also been indicated in this stanza ; *"Having known which you shall be free from all the limitation of finite existence."*

An individual becomes incapable of facing the challenges of life and meeting its rising demands, because, in his false estimation of things and beings he comes to live in discord with the total orchestra of life. To understand ourselves and the world outside is to know the secret of keeping a healthy and happy relationship with the world outside. He who is capable of tuning himself up thus with the total is the one who is marked out for sure success and complete victory in life.

Because of his internal maladjustments we found the hero of his age, Arjuna, behaving as a shattered personality, in the opening chapter of the Geeta. Such an individual, split in himself, comes to feel the problems of life too heavy, the duties of life too irksome, and the life itself too much to bear. All those, who thus allow life to run over them and crush them down, are those who are termed the *Samsarins*. Those who knew the art of self-development can easily learn how to direct the engine of existence from the driver's seat safely

round every impediment, and they are called the Men of Realisation, the Saints, and the Sages. This status is the heritage of man—of every intelligent being, who has the enthusiasm and the courage to master life and live like a God upon earth ruling over the circumstances, and smiling at the adversities.

The Krishna-cure for the Arjuna-disease is very systematically prescribed in this chapter.

To generate an all-out enthusiasm in the Art of living, which each student has to bring about in his own life, the Art of Self-perfection is praised in the following :

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

2. *rajavidya rajaguhyam*
pavitram idam uttaman
pratyaksavagamam dharmyam
susukham kartum avyayam

राजविद्या - The king of Sciences, राजगुह्यम् - kingly secret, पवित्रम् - purifier, इदम् - this, उत्तमम् - highest, प्रत्यक्षावगमम् - realisable by direct intuitional knowledge, धर्म्यम् - according to righteousness, सुसुखम् - very easy, कर्तुम् - to perform, अव्ययम् - imperishable.

2. Royal Science, Royal Secret, the supreme purifier is this, realisable by direct intuitional knowledge, pertaining to Dharma according to the Dharma very easy to perform, imperishable.

Vedanta is no religion in the ordinary concept of the term, which implies the formalistic observance of some physical and mental discipline, in some House of God, during a specific day of the week for a prescribed length of time. If we consider religion as an Art of Right-action, then Vedanta is indeed the noblest of sciences, because it provides the scientific explanation for the entire ways of right-living. Krishna here qualifies it as, “*this is the Royal Science, the Royal Mystery, pure and very high.*”

The term “Royal Secret” (*Raja-guhyam*) has been too literally understood and insisted upon by the unimaginative *pundits* and the effect of their preaching has brought about, to a large extent, the shattering of our culture, at once distressing and sad. The term ‘secret’ here is to be understood as ‘profound’. Newton’s “Laws of Motion”, though they faithfully work out around every living creature and inert things of the world, to a child or to an ignorant villager, it is a secret, inasmuch as, it is too *profound* for their lay understanding.

Similarly, here, the Science of Self-development and the theories of Vedanta are too profound for the uninitiated that it may be considered as a secret; it is to be unravelled to everyone, which is the duty of the custodians of our scriptural knowledge, traditionally called as the *Brahmins*. Even today all *true* Brahmins perform this function.

Even if there be a Science, royal in its import, deep in its profundity, “supreme in its purifying effects,” unless it be available for comprehension it is almost useless. Here, Krishna promises that it is “*clearly comprehensible*”, since it can be apprehended directly by an immediate experience of the Self.

Also, it is a science “pertaining to Dharma” (*Dharmyam*). The term Dharma has already been explained.* Man is nothing but a parcel of minerals in their gross and

* As the “law of being”:—Refer General Introduction,

subtle states, if the Conscious Principle were not blessing them. This Awareness, called The Self, is then the *Dharma* of man, the Principle of Life in him. The spiritual science, that the Lord of Brindavan promises to enunciate here in the chapter, is not the physical science of the objects of the world—neither the science of the biology that explains the field of emotions and thoughts—but the Science of the Self, the deepest essence in each individual.

“*Very easy to perform.*”—Religion is a subjective technique to be pursued and accomplished by each in himself. If this great science, into which Lord Krishna is proposing to initiate Arjuna, is an extremely difficult proposition to live, then naturally it is a futile philosophy. The poverty of a country is not solved by the declaration of the Scientists that there are inexhaustible quantities of unclaimed gold, waiting for free transportation, in the Moon! In order to remove this vague fear, it has been fully confirmed that the technique of self-integration and the gaining ultimately of a complete mastery over oneself is an easy art to master for the sincere and the diligent.

Even if it be easy, no intelligent man can pursue the path, if the gain thereby acquired is perishable and temporary. It is endorsed here that the gains acquired through a faithful pursuit of this Royal Science of self-development and self-mastery are “*of an imperishable nature*”. To realise the Self is to become the Self, the Eternal, the Infinite Reality behind the phenomenal world of appearances,

As a contrast to those who are seeking, the destiny of those who are not seeking the Imperishable is declared to be the life of Samsar:—

अश्रद्धानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परंतप ।

अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥ ३ ॥

3. *asraddadhanah purusa*
dharmasya sya paramtapa
aprapya mam nivartante
mrtyuusamsaravartmani

अश्रद्धधाना - Without faith, पुरुषाः - men धर्मेण - of
 duty, अस्य of this, परन्तप O scorcher of foes, अप्राप्य -
 without attaining, माम् - me, निवर्तन्ते - return, मृत्युसंसार-
 वर्तमनि - in the path of this world of death,

3. Persons without faith in this Dharma, (the Divine
 Self), O Parantapa, without attaining Me, return
 to the path of re-birth fraught with death.

Those who are not following a life of accommodation
 and adjustment to the eternal values of the Self, they
 necessarily, "*return without attaining Me*". Men of
 extrovertedness, meditating upon the sense-objects and
 bartering away their intellectual capacities, emotional powers
 and physical strength, for seeking, acquiring and possessing
 the implements to work out their sensual satisfaction, they
 must necessarily return to "*the path of rebirth, fraught with
 death.*"

The more an individual meditates upon the finite, strives
 to gain the changeable and gets choked by the sorrows of the
 perishable, the more he comes to worship and court the
 lower nature of the Self, the *Prakriti*. However big the
 ocean may be, a drop of it, taken at any point in its infinite
 expanse, should taste saline. In the same way, whatever be
 the method of worship, whatever be the motive behind
 the courtings once we allow ourselves to be courtiers of the
 world-of-objects, we are doomed to taste the saline tears of
 sorrow, because of the very ephemeral nature of the
 "objects of our love."

The world of names and forms is finite and ever-changing. At every moment every object is living through a process of change, and each change is a death to its previous existence. Thus, the term 'Death' here used by Krishna in his phrase '*fraught with death*' is to be understood in this liberal meaning of the term. In short, courtiers of the finite, reach the tragic realm of constant death.

Who are all the persons that come to miss their way and reach to walk the Path of Darkness, ultimately come to suffer the sorrows of the finitude and how they fall into this mistake in their valuations, are all fully indicated in the first line. "*Persons without Sraddha for this Dharma*" are sure to miss their way on the great Pilgrimage of Life. In this stanza the crude meaning of the term *Sraddha* as 'blind faith' should not be read. In our days, almost in all Religions the priest-class encourages this cheap emotionalism, divorced totally from the intellect, and converts an entire society to become blind fanatics, neither helping the faithful to grow spiritually nor bringing into the community anything but hatred and jealousy, rivalries and disturbances.

In the perfect Science of Vedanta, *Sraddha*, though it also implies "faith" in the Tagorean sense of the term*, it is not built upon the misty vapours of emotionalism, but upon the solid beams of intellectual understanding and perfect awareness of the logic of thought behind the theory. Sankara defines *Sraddha* as the "moulding of the life and living, on the basis of right intellectual comprehension of what the scripture indicates and the teachers explain". It is the enduring faith that lifts us to realms beyond the reach of the mind and intellect, and helps to carve out of the mortal the Immortal and the Infinite.**

*"Faith is the Bird
that feels the light
and sings when

the dawn is still dark".—Tagore,

** Read Swamiji's "Talks on Vivekachoodamani"

(*Sasirasya Guruvakyasya satyabuddhaya abharanam*,
Sa sraddha kathita sadbhiyaya vastupalabhyate")

Those who have not this healthy understanding and approach to Truth cannot expect to evolve spiritually or benefit themselves by religion more than, perhaps, acquiring a superficial discipline in their outer behaviour in the world of things and beings. The term *Dharma* has been already described.* In the text-books of Vedanta, the main preoccupation of the Rishis is to supply enough arguments and intelligent illustrations to prove to their students that beyond their present conception of themselves as mere bodies and bundles of thoughts and feelings, they are, in essence, the Pure Awareness, without which none of their different layers of personalities can ever come to exist or consistently function, or provide for them a harmonious experience of the whole.

That without which a substance cannot be the substance is called its *Dharma* or essence ; e.g. heat in fire ; cold in ice. Those who have no faith in the Divine Essence, which is the Self in them, are those who get easily abducted by the cooings of their emotions, or the barkings of their intellect or the whisperings of their flesh. They slip into devolution and come to live the life of a biped animal, when they once lose their faith in the Divine core which is their essential Being. A mad king who has forgotten his own kingship throws his kingly dignity to the winds and runs about naked on the streets, behaving as though he were one of the homeless vagabonds. Similarly, when an individual, in his own self-forgetfulness of the dignity of his essential Self-hood, comes to live in the open streets of sense-pleasures, hunting for his satisfactions, as though he were nothing better than the crawling worms in the wayside ditches.

Simple-looking though it be, this stanza is very pregnant in its untold suggestiveness. By contrasting thus the Path of Knowledge with the Path of Ignorance in the most vivid terms, Krishna brings to the comprehension of Arjuna the

* "As the Law of being"—Refer "General Introduction".

advisability of the blessed path of higher seeking, the realisation of the Imperishable.

In the following the Knowledge is, therefore, glorified when Krishna explains what this Dharma is which is to be followed :

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।

मस्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ ४ ॥

4. *maya tatam idam sarvam
jagad avyaktamurtina
matsthani sarvabhutani
na ca ham tesu avasthitah*

मया - By me, ततम् - pervaded, इदम् - this, सर्वम् - all, जगत् - world, अव्यक्तमूर्तिना - of the unmanifested form. मस्थानि - exist in Me, सर्वभूतानि - all beings, न - not, च - and, अहम् - I, तेषु - in them, अवस्थितः - placed.

4. All this world is pervaded by Me in My unmanifested form (aspect) ; all beings exist in Me, but I do not dwell in them.

In the previous chapter, throughout it has been indicated that the Imperishable Self is the Supreme Unmanifest, that forms the essential substratum for the manifested mental impressions, the projection of which causes the creation. This Eternal Unmanifest Self is now described, to indicate It, in the following stanzas. Faithfully adhering to the role of the Divine Song, here also the first person singular is used to indicate the Pure Consciousness, the Atman.

"All this world is pervaded by Me in My unmanifest form."—Pervasiveness is the nature of the subtle, and the

Subtle-of-the-subtle must necessarily be All-pervasive. The All-pervasive alone can be the Eternal and the Infinite, because, otherwise it would become limited by that which is not pervaded by it, and all limited things necessarily must have forms. All those that have forms are perishable substances (*Dravya*). Thus Self in its essential Unmanifest nature must be pervading everything, as the mud pervades all forms and shapes in all mud-pots.

If thus the Infinite pervades the finite* what exactly is the relationship between them? Is it that the finite *rose* from the Infinite? Or is it that the Infinite *produced* the finite? Has the Infinite Itself *become* the finite, as a modification of itself, or do they both among themselves *keep* a father-son or a master-servant relationship? The above-mentioned questions are some of the relations found described in the various religions of the world. The dualists can afford to indulge in such a fancied picture of some relation or other between the finite and the Infinite. But the (*Advaitins*) Non-dualists cannot accept this idea since to them the Eternal Self alone is the one and only Reality.

The second line of this stanza is a classical description of this 'relationless-relationship' between the Real and the unreal. "*All beings exist in Me but I dwell not in them.*" To a hasty reader this would strike as an incomparable paradox expressed in a jumble of empty words. But to one who has well-understood the theory of superimposition, this becomes very easy. The ghost-vision can come only upon the post. And what exactly is the relationship between the ghost and the post from the standpoint of the post? The innocent post, in infinite love for the deluded fool, can only make a similar statement as the Lord had made here. "The ghost," must say the post, "is no doubt, in me but I am not in the ghost; and therefore, I have never frightened any deluded traveller at any time." In the same fashion, the Lord says

*Read Swamiji's "Discourses on Isavasyopanistad"—Opening Mantra.

here, “*I in My Unmanifest Nature is the Substratum for all the manifested*” chaos of names and forms but neither in their joys nor in their sorrows, neither in their births nor in their deaths am I sharing their destinies, because, “*I do not dwell in them.*”

This line resounds a faithful echo of the same idea, perhaps, more crisply expressed earlier,* where it was said “*I am not in them, they are in Me.*” In short, it is indicated here that the Self, through its identification with the matter envelopments, that comes to “dwell in them” is the pain-ridden mortal, while the same Self which has successfully withdrawn all its false arrogations with the matter layers and has come to realise that, “*I do not dwell in them*” is the Self-Immortal and Unmanifest.

Then there must be some sort of an existence for the finite in the Infinite—eh ?

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।

भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥ ५ ॥

5. *na ca matsthani bhutani
pasya me yogam aisvaram
bhutabhrn na ca bhutastho
mama atma bhutabhavanah*

न - Not, च - and, मत्स्थानि - dwelling in Me, भूतानि - beings. पश्य - behold, मे - my, योगम् - Yoga, ऐश्वरम् - Divine, भूतभृन्न - supporting the beings, न - not, च - and, भूतस्थः - dwelling in the beings, मम - my, आत्मा - Self, भूतभावनः - bringing forth beings.

5. Nor do beings exist (in reality) in Me—behold My Divine Yoga ! supporting all beings, but not dwelling

in them, is (Me) my Self, the efficient cause of all beings.

In paradoxes alone can delusory nothingness be defined and explained away by an intellect. A growing boy—who is suffering from a mental hallucination that a fairy on butterfly wings comes to his window at night—can be pacified and trained to laugh at it only by explaining that it is a loving and graceful child born to Mother-Night and living in the House of Moon.

The hallucination of plurality, cognised and experienced, when the Self looks out through the windows of its mind and intellect, can be pacified and removed only when it is explained away ; and the explanation of the non-existence can be done only in the language of a paradox. Here Krishna is quite at it, with a pleasant vengeance, we may add !!

Continuing the strain of his arguments in the previous stanza, here he says, "*Nor do things exist in me.*" In the previous, we were told, "*all beings exist in Me,*" although "*I dwell not in them.*" Now here he says that in the Infinite never has the finite ever risen up ! Continuing our example of the post and the ghost this is equivalent to the post declaring that, "in me, the electric post, never has a ghost ever existed." In Pure Awareness, in its Infinite Nature of sheer knowledge, there never was, is or can ever be any world of pluralistic embodiment, just as for the waker none of the pleasures of the dream-world is ever available. In short, at the time of the direct subjective experience of the Self there is no cognition of the pluralistic world, which is but a creature of misunderstanding born out of the forgetfulness of the Infinite.

The Self is the one that "*brings forth and supports all beings*" just as the ocean gives birth to, supports and nourishes all the waves in it. "*And yet,*" says Krishna, "*Myself does never dwell in them.*" Just the same way as the ocean can cry that "I am never the waves." The mud is the womb

of all pots, the sustainer of their shapes, the nourisher of their forms, and yet, none of the pots, nor all the pots put together, can ever define or give a total knowledge of the mud. Pure Consciousness, Divine and Eternal, is the Substratum, that sustains and illumines the entire panorama of the changeable plurality

The objects of the world conveying their stimuli through the doors of the sense-organs create mental waves which are illumined by the Conscious Principle residing in all forms. If the Awareness is not there, the external world must necessarily fail in giving the mind-and-intellect the concept of its life as a series of unbroken experiences. Just as the cotton is in the cloth, or the gold is in all ornaments, or the heat in fire, so too, the Imperishable is in the perishable. The dreamer can function only in the waker; the waker pervades the dream-experiences, and yet, at the same time, the waker is not in the dream nor in fact when wakened fully, the dream ever exists in the waker.

Krishna feels that the language of paradox is proving too much of a riddle to the gross intellect of the average man in Arjuna, and, therefore in his divine kindness the Lord provides for his disciple an example :

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगोमहान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥ ६ ॥

6. *yatha kasasthito nityam
vayuh sarvatraga mahan
tatha sarvani buthani
matsthani ty upadharaya*

यथा - As, आकाशस्थितः - rests in the Akasa, नित्यम् - always, वायुः - the air, सर्वत्रगः - moving everywhere, महान् - great, तथा - so, सर्वाणि - all, भूतानि - beings, मत्स्थानि rest in me, इति - thus, उपधारय - know.

6. As the mighty wind, moving everywhere rests always in space (the *Akasa*), even so, know you, all beings rest in Me.

The confused Prince trying to reconcile the full import of the riddle is helped here by the kindly teacher in Krishna by a vivid example. To imagine the idea of a substance that exists everywhere, allowing everything to exist in it, but at the same time it in itself does not get conditioned by the things that exist in it, is very difficult, and the ordinary comprehension cannot easily soar to those heights of understanding and appreciation. As a prop for the ordinary intellect to raise itself up so that it may peep over its own limitations and gain a *dehko* at the unravelling expanse of the Infinite, here is a brilliant example given by the Wonder-singer of the Jamuna Ghats

The gross can never condition the subtle. "Stone walls do not a prison make." for, even though we may imprison the body of the prisoner, his thoughts are ever free to reach his kith and kin at their hearth. The gross stone walls cannot limit the flight of the subtle thoughts. If, once this principle is well understood, the example becomes very expressive exhibiting all its secret suggestions.

"*Know you Arjuna*", that the winds curl and swirl to whirl round everywhere in space, they can move and exist only in space, the space supports and envelopes them everywhere, and yet, they do not ever at all limit the space. This beautiful example when meditated upon by any seeker, if he has atleast an average amount of the intellectual comprehension, will become easy for him to define, at least in his own mind, the right relationship that exists between the Self and the Not-Self. The Real supports the unreal; the unreal seemingly lives.....through its history of misery and sorrows, fleeting joys and passing pleasures ...in the Real and yet, the unreal can never condition the Real.

When the wind is moving, the space need never move, None of the qualities of the wind is the quality of the Space (*Akasha*). Compared with the outstretching Infinite space, in which the universes keep on revolving among themselves, at a speed measured in light-years, the atmospheric disturbances, are only upto the height of a few miles off the surface of the globe. In the infinite vastness of the Real, the arena of disturbances caused by its flirtations with its own assumed self-ignorance, is only at a negligible area..... and even there the relationship between the false and Real is the relationship between the fickle breeze and the Infinite space.

These two are stanzas not merely to be explained away by words, however true the commentator may be ; they are to be meditated upon by the students individually. Milk cannot be eaten nor *Iaddu* swallowed ; those who do so may come to suffer.

Then what about your wonderful theory of a systematic Law of Rebirth—the story of a creator creating the world during his day-time—and dissolving the entire lot during his night-time etc. ? Listen :—

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिदम् ।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विमृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥

7. *sarvabhutani kaunteya
prakrtim yanti mamikam
kalpaksaye punas tani
kalpadau visrjami aham*

सर्वभूतानि - All beings, कौन्तेय - O Kaunteya, प्रकृतिम् - to Prakriti, याति - go, मामिदम् - my, कल्पक्षये - at the end of the Kalpa, पुनः - again, तानि - them, कल्पादौ - at the beginning of a Kalpa, विमृजामि - send forth, अहम् - I.

7. All beings, O Kaunteya (O Son of Kunti) go into My *Prakriti* (nature) at the end of a *Kalpa*; I send them forth again at the beginning of (the next) *Kalpa*.

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विमृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृन्ममवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥ ८ ॥

8. *prakṛtim svam avastabhya
visṛjami punah-punah
bhūtagramam imam kṛtsnam
avasam prakṛter vasaṭ*

प्रकृतिम् - *Prakriti* (nature), स्वाम् - My own, अवष्टभ्य - having animated, विमृजामि - (I) send forth, पुनः again, पुनः - again, भूतग्रामम् - multitude of beings, इमम् ; this, कृन्मम् : all, अवशम् - helpless, प्रकृतेः - of *Prakriti* (nature), वशात् - by force.

8. Animating My *Prakriti*, I again and again send forth all this multitude of beings, helpless by the force of Nature (*Prakriti*).

Earlier in a discourse Lord Krishna had explained* how the creative projection of the total-mind transcribes the existing subtle-*Vasanas* into the gross apparent forms, and again during the dissolution, the gross projections are absorbed into their Unmanifested condition. The same idea is explained here again in these two stanzas not merely as an idle repetition but with a definite purpose of indicating that the Creator is capable of functioning only under the grace of the Supreme Unmanifest Self.

The Eternal Brahman functioning through the equipment of the total mind is the God-principle, the Creator, and

* VIII—17, 18 & 19

the same Absolute Brahman functioning through the limited individual mind-and-intellect is the individualised Self, the mortal Ego, (*Samsari*). The same sun gets itself reflected in the clear still waters of a vast lake and in the disturbed muddy-pool of the roadside; the difference between the two distinctive reflections, in the different equipment, will explain the difference between the individual-ego and the God-principle. Just as the sun in the sky can rightly say, "I am the cause for the brilliant reflection in the lake and the broken, dull reflection in the way-side pool", so too Krishna, the Self, declares, "I am the Vital animating Reality behind the Creator and the created".

The adjunct of the God-principle, the total body-mind-intellect equipment, constitutes the lower nature of the Self, called the *Prakriti*. At the beginning of a cycle the existing *vasanas* in the lower nature get projected out* and at the end of the Kalpa all beings go to My *Prakriti*."

The act of invigorating or fertilising the *Prakriti* to grow up again into the tree of *Samsar*, is an act of grace from the *Brahman*. If the Supreme Consciousness were not to identify with the *Prakriti*, She being inert in Herself, cannot project forth any life at all. The entire multitude of *Vasanas*, "I project again and again". When the Self animates the *Prakriti*, and the *Vasanas* have no freedom at all to refuse expression, because, "they are helpless under the sway of the *Prakriti*."

In philosophy often the Rishis explain the universe from the standpoint of the macrocosm (*Samashiti*) which has a knack of confusing the students, unless each student strives hard to understand its implications subjectively in himself, as microcosm (*Vyashiti*). Viewed thus, in the individual subjective inner-life-story, the statement proves to be indeed true, since without the life in us—the Self—

*"I send them forth again"; Refer the story of the four men sleeping in the way-side rest-house—Discourse on VIII—18 & 19.

indentifying with the lower nature in us, the mind and intellect equipment, cannot create the characteristic ego, which can come to suffer its limited existence.

We have already found that the greatest scoundrel and the noblest saint are both the same when neither of them is identifying with his mind and intellect, in the state of their deep-sleep. On waking up, the scoundrel-mind projects a scoundrel, and the saintly-mind projects the saint; and the Vitality behind both is the same Spark-of-Life, Consciousness Absolute. Thus, the scoundrel is incapable of not behaving as a scoundrel, as much as the saint cannot by any change play the scoundrel even for a moment. The scoundrel is as much helpless as the Saint; both being "*helplessly under the sway of the Prakriti*" in each. And the entire drama of the dissolution of *Vasana*-expressions and the projection of the *Vasana*-dances are performed upon the Changeless Imperishable Eternal platform of the Self: "*I project again and again*".

We may note here that a large portion of the Vedantic categories has been beautifully summarised here, and no other pen can give such a masterly summary except the pen of Vyasa, softened by the volumes of literature that it had produced, for all later generations to admire, enjoy and profit by.

The Law of Karma, is incontrovertible; as the action so the reaction. If the Self administers the dissolution and supervises the projection of the pluralistic world how far does the Law of Karma shackle the Infinite? Listen:—

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ।

उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥ ९ ॥

9. *na ca mam tani karmani
nibadhananti dhananjaya
udasinavad asinam
asaktam tesu karmasu*

न - Not, च - and, माम् - me, तानि - these, कर्माणि - acts, निबध्नन्ति - bind, धनञ्जय - O Dhananjaya, उदासीनवत् - like one indifferent, आसीनम् - sitting, असक्तम् - unattached, तेषु - in those, कर्मसु - acts.

9. These acts do not bind Me, O Dhananjaya sitting like one indifferent, unattached to those acts.

In the case of the limited Ego, its ego-centric actions leave behind their impressions which ultimately pursue it as unavoidable reactions. All ego-centric actions, which are always motivated by selfish-desires, leave behind their ugly foot-prints upon the shores of the mind, while actions which are not ego-motivated can leave no trail, as the birds leave no foot-prints as they move along in the sky. An ungrateful son kicking his own father can be compared with an innocent child in its own playful moods kicking its father, with both its legs. A philosopher's subtle vision is not necessary to understand the difference in texture between these two persons performing the same action. Wherever and whenever an ego-centric action, whipped up by limited selfish-desires, is undertaken gross and painful reactions must necessarily ensue.

In the case of the Eternal animating Its *Prakriti*, and projecting out “*again and again the multitude of beings*”, there is neither any attachment (*Raga*) nor any aversion (*Dvesha*) and, therefore, by this mere happening on the Eternal, the Supreme is not affected : “*These acts do not bind Me.*”

However tragic and murderous the play may be, however tearful and sad the story be, however rainy and stormy the scene be, the white screen in the cinema-hall, at the end of the play carries neither the marks of the blood spilt, nor the stains of the tears shed, nor the wear and tear of the storm raged. At the same time, we all know that but for the changeless screen, the story could never have been unravelled through the medium of light and shade. In the same fashion, the Ever-pure Infinite as the Self becomes the enduring platform for the drama of sorrow that is expressed in the language of the plurality, enacted by the infinite *Vasanas* helplessly repeating their parts learnt by them through the hours of their empty yesterdays !!

The steam in the engine is not punished for the disaster of derailment, nor is the steam complimented when the train reaches its destination in time. It is very well known that neither the disaster nor the successful accomplishment of the journey could ever take place without the steam. The engine without steam is inert iron of a particular shape, dull and heavy ; it is the steam that dynamises and renders it capable of its actions of cruel destruction or kindly construction. Since the steam in the engine has neither an anxiety to move the train, nor an aversion to move it, the steam is ignored in the achievements of the train, whether good or bad. In short, it is the motive behind the action that determines its reaction.

The Self is the Source of all dynamism. It dynamises the mind. Each mind is a bundle of *Vasanas*. Good *Vasanas* make the mind sing the song of joy and harmony. Bad *Vasanas* in the mind make it groan with sobs and tears. The needle in the gramophone is not responsible for the song that the record sings. As the record so the music. Similarly, the Self is Eternal. It is unmindful of what type of world is projected forth. Nor is It anxious, in any sense of the term, to create a better world. Sunlight illumines whatever happens to be there in its light, be it a murder, or be it a martyrdom. Neither the glory of the martyr, nor the crime of the murderer

can reach the sun. The Self, as Pure Consciousness, illumines the *Vasanas* and lends them the capacity to project out, be it for the damnation of themselves or their own self-glorification. “*Sitting as one neutral, unattached to them*” the Self reveals in the realm of its lower nature (*Prakriti*).

What exactly is this strange relationship between the Infinite and the finite? The finite acts because of the Infinite, and yet the Infinite is said to be neutral—how?

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सृजते सचराचरम् ।

हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ १० ॥

10. *maya dhyaksena prakritih
suyate sacaracaram
hetuna nena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate*

मया - By me, अध्यक्षेण - as supervisor, प्रकृतिः : Nature, सृजते - produces, सचराचरम् - the moving and the un-
moving, हेतुना - by cause, अनेन - by this, कौन्तेय - O
Kaunteya, जगत् - the world, विपरिवर्तते - revolves.

10. Under Me as supervisor, *Prakriti* (nature) produces the moving and the un-moving; because of this, O Kaunteya, the world revolves.

In Vedanta this relationship between the actionless Self and the active Not-Self has been brought out by a bunch of analogies, each one trying to throw as much light upon this sacred tie of ‘relationless-relationship.’

The sun in the sky remaining where it is, warms up the objects upon which its rays fall...without warming the intervening medium through which they pass. Similarly, the Self

remains in Its own Infinite glory, and the Not-Self gets dynamised to act as the Prakriti in the mere presence of the Self.

The king gets a fancy that he should visit a given pilgrim centre during the full-moon day of the following month, and this intention is expressed to his minister, and the king forgets all about it. But on the day prior to the following full-moon, the minister approaches the king to remind him that it is time for the Royal procession. When the king comes out, he finds that the entire route is thronged with his subjects. Welcoming arches are raised at different places en-route. All detailed arrangements are planned out and colourfully executed for his *Dharsan* and return. All the officers and subjects have poured out all their capacities and knowledge to make the royal visit a great success.

In all these feverish activities, everyone gained his authority and power only because of the king, and yet, the king himself was nowhere in the picture. The minister had his sanction from the king, and, therefore, his orders were faithfully executed by all others. Had the minister in himself tried to organise such a show as an ordinary citizen, he would never have succeeded even by a fraction. Similarly, in the mere presence of the Self, *Prakriti* borrows its sanction to plan and to execute, to act and to achieve.

Subjectively this becomes more clear. The *Athman*, merely by Its presence illumines the mind and intellect and creates for the expression of their *Vasanas*, the entire field of the world-objects and the required instruments of experience constituted of the organs-of-perception and the organs-of-action. “*Nature, while I preside, gives birth to the world of things and beings*”—the Nature here means the Unmanifested that gets projected forth as the manifest.

The continued dance of the world of plurality to the rhythm of change and death is maintained in the presence

of the Self ; “ *the world wheels round and round because of this* ”. In the final analysis, Self does nothing. It is the *Prakriti* that projects and executes ; the *Prakriti* that gets animated by the proximity of the Self. It is the Light of the Self that vitalises the *Prakriti* and makes her exist and act. That is all the relationship between Her—The Self and the Not-Self, the *Prakriti*.

This would become more clear if the student would try to understand this relationship exactly as the relationship, that can exist between the way-side post and the ghost that is seen superimposed upon it by the deluded.

If the Self be thus the¹ Essential Reality in every form and if It be ever-free from the sorrows and tribulations of the finite, why is it that all-beings are not able to identify themselves with It and exist as the Self? Listen :—

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ ११ ॥

11. *avajananti mām mudha
manusim tanum asritam
param bhavam ajananto
mama bhutamahesvaram*

अवजानन्ति - Disregard, माम् - Me, मूढाः fools, मानुषीम् - human, तनुम् - form, आश्रितम् - refuted (in), परम् - higher, भावम् - state or nature, अजानन्तः - not knowing, मम - my, भूतमहेश्वरम् - the Great Lord of beings.

11. Fools disregard Me when I dwell in human form ;
My higher Being as the Great Lord of beings,
they know it not.

In the seventh chapter while giving a discourse upon the higher and lower nature of the Eternal, it was declared that the *foolish* regard the Unmanifested as having come into manifestation, in their ignorance of the supreme-state of the higher-Self as Immutable and Transcendental*. In the chapter now under discussion, while discussing himself as the Self of all, Krishna uses the same strong word, "fools," to condemn those who cling on to the form and lose the essence. "*Unaware of My higher nature, fools regard Me*" as dwelling in a particular form.

Idol worship is, no doubt a great help and a convenient technique by which the limited mind and intellect can learn safely to swim across the ocean of Samsar and reach the infinite shores that lie Beyond. Vyasa was the father of the present type of idol-worship, although the rudiments of the technique are met with even in the earliest Vedic-periods, where in a manifested phenomenon is made to represent the Unmanifested Noumenon. Fire was worshipped during the *Yagnas* and *Yagas*, and the revered Rishi himself, as the Guru, was considered equally divine for purposes of *Upasana* in the Vedic-period.

An extension of this technique in its application is the idol-worship of the present day. As the progenitor of this new innovation, Vyasa could see clearly the possible dangers that might come into vogue, when the later generations forget to understand the science that supports the practice. And how true was his fear! He, therefore, had to carefully indicate the pit-falls, and warn the pilgrims on the Path of Devotion in right time against them.

This stanza is clothed in such excellent well-chosen words that they have a general philosophical meaning and a particular significance inasmuch as they clearly warn us against the above mentioned pit-falls.

* VII—24.

To mistake the idol for God, or the form of the Guru to be the Infinite, is to mistake the container for the contents. Idol is only a symbol (*Prathika*) for an imperceptible and subtle Truth. To play with the milk-bottle is not to feel refreshed when one is hungry or thirsty; playing with a spoon and fork over an empty plate is no satisfaction when the player is really hungry. To mistake the idol to be itself the goal is to mistake the means for the end. And such a misunderstanding breeds fanatics, who sow seeds of rivalry and jealousy to reap in time a harvest of death and disaster, all in the name of their stone-deities, wooden-symbols, or brass-Gods. Three coloured tiny bits may make a Khadi-Flag, but it is not my mother-land; but when I bow my head as my national flag goes up, I am adoring my country; the Flag is the sacred symbol of my country's culture and its aspirations.

With this idea in mind, if we read the stanza it becomes very vivid and clear. Lord says that ordinary devotees are unaware of His real status "*as the great Lord of all beings*"* and these mis-understood "*fools scorn Me when I dwell in human form*" meaning; when they consider Him, the Self, as living merely in a human form, which He may take to Himself, when He lists, to bless the generation in that fashion.

Why are the fools rendered incapable of right-understanding and correct-judgement regarding the true-nature of the Self?

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।

राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥ १२ ॥

12. *moghasa moghakarmano*
moghajnana vicetasah
raksasim asurim caiva
prakrtim mohinim sritah

* "*Bhōta-Maheswaram*"—IX-11.

मोघाशाः - Of vain hopes, मोघकर्माणिः - of vain actions, मोघज्ञानाः - of vain knowledge, विचेतसः - senseless, राक्षसीम् - Devilish, आसुरीम् - Undivine, च - and, एव - verily, प्रकृतिम् - nature, मोहिनीम् - delusive, श्रिताः - (are) possessed of.

12. Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge and senseless, they verily are possessed of the delusive nature of *Rakshasas* and *Asuras*.

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।

भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम्॥ १३ ॥

13. *mahatmanastu mam partha
daivim prakrtim asritah
bhajanty ananyamanaso
jnatva bhutadim avyayam*

महात्मानः - Great souls, तु - but, माम् - me, पार्थ - O Partha, दैवीम् - Divine, प्रकृतिम् - Nature, आश्रिताः refused (in), भजन्ति - worship, अनन्यमनसः - with a mind devoted to nothing else, ज्ञात्वा - having known, भूतादिम् - the source of beings, अव्ययम् - imperishable.

13. But the *Mahatmas* (great souls) O Partha, partaking of My divine nature, worship Me with a single mind (with a mind devoted to nothing else), knowing Me as the imperishable source of beings.

In order to drive home an argument it is the style in Krishna's discourses that he always brings the contrasting factors together so that each may come to shine all the more against the back-ground supplied by the other. Here is a

pair of stanzas in which if the former explains the low men of delusive nature (*Rakshasas and Asuras*) the latter paints the picture of the great-souled ones (*Mahatmas*), possessed of the divine qualities.

Deluded by false desires and wearied with false activities to fulfil those wrong desires, some become confused in intellect and totally confounded in their reasoning. Such people lose all perspective divine and become monstrous in their activity* expressing nothing but their demoniac sensuous nature at all times. Such Men are called here as *Rakshasas* and *Asuras* belonging to the tradition of Ravana and the culture of Lanka.

Men who have thus lost their higher urges in their pre-occupations with the material gains and sensuous joys, come to breed a civilisation which respects no sanctity of life nor of wealth, and to them the temporary end justifies even the most vicious means. It does not call for great power of imagination to understand what would be the nature of the world and the life of the community in it, when such men come to rule over the society. War and pestilence, crime and disease, inequality in wealth and in opportunities,—in short, a purely materialistic people alone can be reared up, when such a philosophy of the flesh is pursued diligently, to live in.

The cause for such a fall in the values of men is being carefully indicated here. It starts with the vain desires. Gross and dangerous desires entertained by a member of the society indicate the lack of education in him in the Science of cultural self-development. The desires in the intellect order the types of thoughts in the mind, and they, expressed in the outer world, are the very substance of the actions. Naturally, therefore, vain desires give rise to futile thoughts which, when expressed in the world, can produce only sorrow-breeding actions of destruction.

* The same idea has been with equal clarity described earlier :
Read discourses on VII—15.

The actions undertaken in life leave their impressions on the mind and order the future desires and thoughts in the individual. Out of vain actions, only negative *Vasanas* can be raised, and they can only thicken the dull-witted stupidities of the intellect. When an individual has lived in this ditch of falsehood and impurity, he cannot but become anything nobler than a monster in the eyes of the wise.

As a contrast to this *Rakshasa*-culture we are shown how the men of wisdom feel and act. This dissection of the man's bosom reveals to the seekers of self-development the right attitude they must take and the correct perspective with which they must look at things of the world.

"The great-souled ones possessed of the divine Prakriti" of the Self and desiring for this Infinite in values of return, seek the Immortal by realising the Self, *"through single-pointed self-application."* They *"know Me to be the Origin of all beings"*; and those who know the mud to be the origin of all mud-pots, cannot fail to see the mud in all pots. So too, the true children of the Hindu culture, who understand the Divine Principle as the source of all beings, cannot but respect every other member of the society as they would respect themselves. There is no greater and more efficient socialism ever preached in the world. If the present generation is not able to understand and appreciate this spiritual-socialism, which is the only panacea for the ills of the world—the reason for it has been already given in the former stanza of this pair now under discussion—it is because of the predominance of the *Asuric*-forces in us.

The great-souled ones "worship Me with the single-pointed mind"—how?

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।

नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ १४ ॥

14. *satatam kirtayanto mam
yatantas ca drdhavratah
namasyantas ca mam bhaktya
nityayukta upasate*

सततं - Always, कीर्तयन्तः - glorifying, मां - Me,
यतन्तः - striving, च-and, दृढव्रताः - firm in vows, नमस्यन्तः-
prostrating, च - and, माम् - Me, भक्त्या -with devotion,
नित्ययुक्ताः - always steadfast, उपासते - worship.

14. Always glorifying Me, striving, firm in vows,
prostrating before Me, they worship Me with
devotion, always steadfast.

Even though in the previous stanza, while describing the high-souled ones, (a) the Paths of Knowledge was indicated* here the other two main Paths of self-integration and self-development are hinted at, viz. (b) single-pointed devotion, and (c) selfless-activity undertaken in the true *Yagna*-spirit.

“*Glorifying Me always*”—The grossest practice of this is the general noisy crowd that sings the Lord’s glories with the accompaniment of equally noisy and crude instruments. But the implication of the *Kirtan* is much more sacred. Indeed, to adore an ideal with reverence and devotion, and to sing His glories at all time continuously, is the silent act of a mind that has been fully opened up to appreciate the ideal that one has learnt to glorify. The silent adoration of the society by the social-workers, or the steady flow of love that beams out from a man of Knowledge for the entire kingdom of the living, constitute the greatest and the most potent type of *Kirtans*, than the noisy crowd that assemble from their different fields of dubious activities, for a short interval each day, only to return back to the same dens of vices, after the *Bhajan* !!

* “Knowing Me to be origin of beings and Immutable”

“*Striving with firm resolve*”—These are the simple logical facts that are generally overlooked by the seekers and they come to dig the graves for their own successes in spiritual practices. The generality of the folk believe that some specific routine acts of devotional flavour, if pursued physically for a short interval of time on particular days of the week, they have done their part of the game. The rest is for their imaginary Gods to cook and bring in front of them dressed to taste. This absurd, superstitious idea has nothing to do with the Science of self-perfection, of which religion forms the technical part.

Constant and awareful effort is unavoidable if an individual is to get himself hauled out, from his present ruts of wrong thinking and false valuations of life and things. The disharmony he experiences in life, and the wrong notes that are sung by the situations in life upon the harp of his heart are all due to the mal-adjustments in the instruments-of-experience in the individual. To re-adjust them calls forth continuous vigilance, non-stop self-application, and sincere pursuit.

And, while thus striving for the self-redemption, no doubt, vascillations caused by instinctive biological temptations would often reach the seeker to whisper in his ears and make him eat the ‘forbidden fruit’. At such moments of severe temptations, he must discover in himself a firm resolve to reject* the false and to walk steadily the path of the Real.

“*Bowing down to Me in devotion*”—One of the unconscious blasphemies that even the faithful Hindu, in spite of himself, practises is the false-*Namaskars*. No other term has been so badly mis-understood in Hinduism as ‘to bow’ to the elders or to the Lord. As it is now practised, it would look as if the seemingly devoted has a malicious intention of catching at the feet of a moving Master; only to make him fall forward with head on.

* “*Dhridha-Vratah*”—Ibid stanza.

Prostration, though it be a physical act, implies the detachment and surrender of all the false identifications in the devotee with his own matter-envelopments. The significance of the symbolism has been totally forgotten and the empty act is continued : surely, by sowing the chaff no crop can be harvested.

True devotion is love supreme. Love is measured in terms of the lover's identification with the beloved. Devotion to "*Me, the origin of beings and the Immutable*" is the way for the deluded-ego to identify itself with the Self. And this is brought to a successful culmination only by the process of detaching itself from its Not-Self conditionings. This negative aspect of Self-withdrawal from the layers of the Not-Self is indicated by the "*Bowing down to Me*". The positive side of the Art of Self-Realisation is pursued, when, with a steady single-pointed mind, the seeker comes to insist upon till ultimately he re-discovers for himself his own total identification with the Self. This positive aspect is indicated by the phrase : "*in devotion*".

The process of withdrawing ourselves from our misconceived identities and the final re-discovery of our infinite potentialities, through our constant devotion to the Self, can be achieved only by the one among us who "*is steadfast and worships Me*".

The Path of Knowledge knows no flower-throwing, chandan-sprinkling or Laddu-showing methods of ritualistic worship. To keep in the mind, an alert and vigilant flow of thoughts in our adoration for the nature of the Self as the Substratum of the entire Universe and the essence in all beings, is the truest of worships that can open up the buds of our ego-centric lives into the blossoms of Godmen, wafting their fragrance of Perfection around.

If we were to merely accept the usual word-meaning and consider only the direct implication of the stanza, we can say that the verse advises a synthesis of *Yoga* in-

asmuch as it encourages *Bhakti* and *Karma*. In the previous verses, we had already pointed out that it has suggested the Path of Knowledge (*Gyattwa*). It is only too true to say that the Geeta, as a practical handbook of instructions for every man who seeks perfection in himself, takes a very scientific view of the entire technique and therefore, advises a perfect synthesis of the physical, mental, and intellectual personalities in man, through the paths of *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Gyana*.

So also :—

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५ ॥

15. *jnanayajnena ca py anye*
yajanto mam upasate
ekatvena prthaktvena
bahudha visvatomukham

ज्ञानयज्ञेन - With the wisdom-sacrifice, च - and, अपि - also, अन्ये - others, यजन्तः - sacrificing, माम् - me, उपासते : worship, एकत्वेन - as one, पृथक्त्वेन - as different, बहुधा - in various ways, विश्वतोमुखम् - the all-faced.

15. Others also offering the "Wisdom-sacrifice" worship Me, regarding Me as one, as distinct, as manifold—Me, who in all forms face up every where.

The term *Gyana Yagna* cannot easily come within the accommodation of the English phraseology. The matrix of the language breaks when such significant ideas are to be expressed in an equally crisp style as that of the Sanskrit. A heavy key cannot be placed in a hanging cob-web, or at least we should not expect it to stay there !

Yagna means an offering, an oblation thrown into the sacred Altar-of-Fire in a spirit of sacrifice for the invocation and propitiation of the Deity. From this ritualism the term *Gyana Yagna* has been coined, and it is generally translated by hasty compilers and cheap Pundits, as the "Sacrifice-of-Knowledge". The abominable mis-understanding that has resulted from such a misuse is immense. Here the implication is that for the purposes of invoking the Right Knowledge, the false mis-conception in us along with their roots in our negative tendencies, are to be ploughed out and dried with dispassion, and they must be thrown into the rising flames of the newly invoked Right Knowledge. The destruction of ignorance (*Agyan*) with the fires of knowledge (*Gyan*) is called the *Gyana Yagna*, the Knowledge-Sacrifice, wherein the sacrifice is qualified by Knowledge: just as in terms like Fire-Sacrifice, Land-Gift-Sacrifice*, Work-gift sacrifice**, etc.

The *Gyana Yagna* has no ritualism. It is a constant attempt, on the part of the performer, to see in and through the experienced names and forms, the expression and vitality of the one Conscious Principle, the Self. The seeker here, practising *Gyana Yagna*, has understood the significance of the Vedantic assertion that the Immutable Self pervades all, penetrating everything, and, in its homogenous web of existence it holds together the phenomenal multiplicity and their variegated inter-actions.

Chocolates made by different firms, irrespective of their shapes and colours, flavours and prices, are all chocolates and, therefore, their essential nature of sweetness is common in all of them; and the child who is seeking the sweetness of the chocolates will enjoy them, whatever be their shape, the size, or the packing.

Similarly, a seeker of the Self watches for, observes and detects the expression of the Self in all forms and names, in

*Bhoo-dana Yagna.

**Sramadana Yagna.

all situations and conditions. Whatever be the setting in which some diamond bits are held together, to a diamond merchant all of them are so many heavy points of brilliance and light, and he evaluates them for the weight of light contents in each one of them and not for the design or proportion of the ornament.

To a true musician, who has an ear for melody, it is immaterial whether the singer is a cowherd urchin, sitting on the grassy banks of some stagnant-pool, singing on a wild reed, or is he a decorated court musician, sitting in a palace chamber, luxuriously laid with the costliest carpets of the world, singing on the finest and the best-made instruments. For one who is a lover of good music, and who seeks the thrilled hush of joy that he experiences when he gets wafted away from the ephemeral upon the beams of a melodious tune artistically executed, to him there is a melody in the cooing of the birds, in the humming of the beetles, in the croaking of the frogs, in the running streams, in the roaring oceans—even in the passing breeze, as it rustles along the naked branches of the Autumn-trees.

A man of realisation moves about the world, seeking his own Self expressed through every moment and action, word and thought that clusters round him at all times at everyhand. Just as one light in the midst of a thousand mirrors comes to provide crores of reflections everywhere, so too, the one centred in the Self, when he walks out into the world, sees everywhere his own Self dancing and shooting glances at him from all round at once, thrilling him always with the homogenous ecstasy of perfection and bliss.

In the winking of the eyes, in the smile of the friend, in the grin of the enemy, in the harsh words of jealousy and in the soft words of love, in heat and cold, in success and failure—among men, among animals, amidst the trees and in the company of the inert—everywhere he successfully gains the auspicious vision of the Supreme, either as *Existence*

Pure or as *Knowledge* Absolute or as *Bliss* Infinite. This is the meaning of *Ishwara Darshan* or the *Atma Dharshan* which is sung so gloriously in all the scriptures of the world. To watch for and discover the smile of the Divine through the trellis of names and forms is to live in the constant spirit of *Gyana Yagna*.

To adore Him in all visions, to recognise Him in all situations, to feel Him with each thought, is to live in a constant remembrance of the Self and, therefore, such people “worship the Self through the wisdom-Sacrifice (*Gyana Yagna*)”

In the beginning this attempt of seeing the Self is a conscious act, not without its unpleasant strain. But as the seeker develops, in his own spiritual cognition of the Self, the Awareness Divine in his within, it becomes easy for him to recognise the One Self splashing Itself into the myriad forms of Its own effulgent glory: “*Me, who in all forms face up everywhere.*”

The man of realisation not only experiences the Pure Self, uncontaminated by the pluralistic equipments, but, also recognises the same Self as playing through the endless variety of conditionings available in the Universe. Having known the one Sun in the sky, even if we see a thousand reflections of the same in different equipments, in all of them, we see and recognise only the one sun.

Self-realisation in Vedanta is not at all complete if the realised one can keep his composure and equanimity only in solitude and silence; if he recognises and experiences the Divine only at some rare moments of his transcendental experience, then he is not the Man-of-wisdom glorified by the Rishis of the Upanishads. This is the way of the *Yogis*. A Man of true-Knowledge is he to whom the Self alone is the Truth within and without and everywhere. “The one

pervades all and nothing pervades It". To him a market-place of the busiest tension is as much a conducive place for cognising the Self as the quiet Himalayan valleys and their deep caves of roaring silence. With his eyes closed or shut, he, from the balcony of the Infinite in himself, gazes out to experience nothing but his own Self everywhere.

It does not mean that there is any sanction in the stupid myth that is being nourished among us that a man of realisation, as he gazes out into the world, for him the names and forms melt into thin Vapour "the walls disappear from the gaze, and the worlds whirl round him to dissolve into nothingness." Absurd. The fact that such trash is being broadcast even by some of the responsible men and institutions, and that there are Pundits to nod their assent to them, shows the desperate condition of the fall the Science of Truth has come to suffer in the general decadence of the culture.

In my legs as well as in my hands I equally pervade at all moments. I know I am there. To say that this knowledge makes my hands and legs disappear, as mist at the rise of the sun, is a ridiculous lunacy and not the assertions of a true Science. Just as I permeate, fill in, exist, enjoy, and experience through every little portion of my body, all through my waking-hours, at one and the same time, so too, the man of realisation realises that at all times his own Self permeates all the entire 'district' constituting the Universes, in his Infinite domain—"as one, as distinct, as manifold."

Vedanta preaches recognition of the Divinity and the experience of the Infinite in and through life. It is not a passing fancy-experience lived through, during one accidental moment on a bright after-noon—and gone, never more to come back again! It is not an occasion to be celebrated by distributing *laddus* and to retire thereafter for ever, far from that experience! Just as the knowledge acquired by one through one's own education keeps a constant company of the individual at all times and in all conditions—even in his dream—even so, nay, much more powerfully, much more

intimately, much more irredeemably the “ knower of the Self becomes the Self ”; there is no doubt about it. The truth of this Vedantic roar is upheld by the very assertion in the second line : “ *Me the all-formed they worship, as one, as distinct and as facing everywhere in each form* ”.

All that we have so far said is being endorsed here. No doubt, through meditation, when the mind is stilled, the Pure Self, One without a second, is lived. The knower of the mud can easily recognise the mud in all pots ; the shape, size and colour of the pots do not destroy the mud. Similarly, the apparent and delusory names and forms, superimposed upon the Truth, cannot and do not veil the Truth from the “ vision ” of the Man of Truth. Not only does the Seer recognise the Self in each individual separately but Krishna, the upholder of Vedanta, thunders out that the Truth is recognised “ *in each form, as facing everywhere.* ” It is absurd to say that one discovers the essential nature of the pot only on the right-hand bottom of the mud-pot ! The mud is in the pot, facing everywhere, at all times : where the mud is not, there the pot is non-existent. When the Self is not there, the perception of multiple existence is never possible.

If, in a variety of forms different types of worship are performed how do they become all the worship of the one Self?

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमहमाषधम्।

मन्त्रो ऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ १६ ॥

16. *aham kratur aham yajnah*
svadha ham aham ausadham
mantra ham aham eva jyam
aham agnir aham hutam.

अहम् - I, क्रतुः - Sacrifice, अहम् - I, यज्ञः the sacrifice, स्वधा - the offering to *Pitris* or ancestors, अहम् - I, अहम् - I, औषधम् - the medicinal herbs and all plants, मन्त्रः - Sacred syllable, अहम् - I, अहम् - I, एव - also, आज्यम् - ghee or clarified butter, अहम् - I, अग्निः - the fire, -अहम् I, हुतम् - the offering.

16. I am the *Kratu*; I am the sacrifice; I am the offering (food) to *Pitris* or ancestors; I am the medicinal herb and all plants; I am the *Mantra*; I am also the clarified butter; I am the fire; I am the oblation.

Repeating the idea already expressed earlier, in a famous stanza of the Geeta*, this verse expresses how the Self is the existence everywhere, in all actions and factors constituting the actions. Ritualistic actions constitute the worship. At the time of Arjuna, the divine worship was always undertaken in the Vedic ritualism (*Krathu*) in the ritualistic adoration of the deity as prescribed in the *Smriti* (*Yagna*) or in the food-offering for the ancestors *Swadha*. Arjuna is to be taught that all these methods of worship are in a sense nothing but the worship of the Self.

Not only that the different ritualistic prescriptions are all presided over by the Self, but the medical herbs used in the sacrifice (*Ushadha*), the ghee poured into the Altar of Fire (*Ajya*), the oblations (*hutam*) offered, the fire that is invoked (*Agni*), the *mantras* chanted—all of them are nothing but the Self alone expressed through different equipments in different fields. When a variety of ornaments are made from a mass of gold, the gold can certainly say that “I am the pendant, I am the ringlet, I am the chain, I am its shine, I am its hook; I alone am its shape and its glory.” Similarly

* IV—24.

Self being the essence of all happenings and circumstances in which the devotee attempts to adore the Eternal, this assertion here is perfectly true to all philosophic minded readers.

Again:-

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।

वेद्यं पवित्रमोँकार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥ १७ ॥

17. *Pita ham asya jagato
mata dhata pitamahah
vedyam pavitram aumkaora
rk sama yajur eva ca*

पिता - Father, अहम् - I, अस्य - of this, जगतः-world, माता - mother, धाता - the dispenser of the fruits of actions, पितामहः - grandfather, वेद्यम् - the (one) thing to be known, पवित्रम् - the purifier, ओँकारः - the Om-kara, ऋक् - Rik, साम - Sama, यजुः - Yajus - एव - also, च - and.

17. I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the dispenser of fruits of action and the grandsire; the (one) thing to be known, the Purifier, (the syllable) OM, and also the Rik, the Sama and the Yajus also,

The Self is not a vague imperceptible Spirit of Existence in all fields of activities divine—sans emotion, sans relationship, sans qualities. In order to show that there is an ardour of love that permeates the very essence of the Self everywhere the finite relationships of the world are borrowed to indicate the mass of love that the Self is. “*I am the Father, the Mother, the Sustainer, the Grand-sire, the Purifier of the worlds*”.

If there be thus a Self, why should a seeker seek to know it? There are orphans in the world who have never seen or known their parents, and perhaps, never known who sustains them or who educates them. And yet, their lives are not incomplete. The ignorance of one's originator and sustainer is not a great obstacle for one's full-life in the world outside. Why, in the spiritual life a seeker should try to realise the Truth which is no doubt, the Originator of all and the Sustainer of the entire Universe?

The verse insists "*I am the one thing to be known*"—and this is the repeated assertion in all the scriptures, the Self is "that which having known everything else becomes known". To know the Self is to escape the consciousness of the imperfection, the existence finite, the sorrows poignant. To live in the ego, as a mere embodied Self, is to live self-exiled from all the divine potentialities that one is heir to. To re-discover this infinite Beatitude is the only satisfying end and goal of life, where alone an awakened intellect can discover a haven of peace and enduring existence in perfect tranquility.

The Self, the substratum of the entire living kingdom, is symbolised by the Vedic mantra called *Omkar*. Life conceived of as 'the flow of constant experiences' should be the sum-total of all experiences in each one of us during our waking, dreaming and deep-sleep states. The Substratum for these three states and their experiences must be something other than these three, inasmuch as the rider is always different from the ridden. The container is different from the contained. The Substratum is different from the superimpositions upon It.

This fourth-state supporting and embracing the three ordinary states of consciousness in every one of us* is termed as *Turiya* by the Upanishad seers. The one symbol representing

* Refer Discourses on Mandukya and Karika—Discussion on the Turiya: Mantra 7.

all these four states is called *Omkar*, and naturally, therefore, the Ultimate indicated by OM, is the Self—conceived of, for the purposes of worship, as Krishna in *Sirmad Bhagavatam*.

The Self is the Essence indicated by Om, and this Absolute Reality is the one theme, tacitly expressed or implicitly implied in all the Vedas, and therefore, it is said “*I am also the Rik, Sama and Yajus.*” It is to be noticed here that the compiler of the Vedas, Vyasa, in *Geeta* recognises only the three earliest Vedas, and not the *Atharvana Veda* which preponderates in the discussions on engineering and such other secular sciences.

Further:—

गतिर्भता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।

प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ १८ ॥

18. *gatir bharta prabhuh saksi
nivasah saranam suhrt
prabhavah pralayah sthanam
nidhanam bijam avyayam.*

गतिः - The goal, भर्ता - the Supporter, प्रभुः the Lord, साक्षी - the Witness, निवासः - the abode, शरणम् - the shelter, सुहृत् - the friend, प्रभवः - the origin, प्रलयः the dissolution, स्थानम् - the foundation, निधानम् - the treasure-house, बीजम् - the seed, अव्ययम् - imperishable.

18. I am the Goal, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Shelter, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Foundation, the Treasure-house and the Seed Imperishable.

Continuing the theme of the status of the Self as the very essence behind the seeming plurality of the world—recognised in our ignorance, and in fact nothing but a dreamy superimposition gathering its existence from the Reality behind it—the Lord defends himself with a host of suggestive words strung together to form the exquisite verse, pregnant and full, for all the students of Meditation.

“I am the goal” (*Gati*)—inasmuch as all our seeking ends when all imperfections vanish in the total experience of the Perfect. To the one, frightened by the vision of a delusory serpent, consolation and satisfaction can come only when his delusion has ended by the discovery of the rope. The Self is the Substratum of the sorrow-ridden universe of multiplicity ; to realise the Self is to transcend all the choking sense of limitations. The Knowledge-Absolute, by gaining which all becomes known, is shown here as the Self.

“I am the Supporter” (*Bharta*)—Just as the desert supports the illusory pool of water, which the thirsty traveller in his delusion recognises, so too, the Self is the Supporter of everything. As Absolute Existence It lends a semblance of reality to the perceptions of the sense-organs, and thus holds together the flood-of-change into a consistent pattern called the life.

“I am the Lord” (*Prabhu*)—Even though the Self thus lends Its grace to the realm of imperfections, sustained and maintained by the agitations of the mind, It, as the Pure Awareness, is ever beyond the sorrows and joys of the apparent and delusory universe. Through different equipments, electricity may pass, manifesting different expressions of its own glory, but in none of them electricity loses itself, if we consider the current as pure energy.

In all these panorama of expressions, the Self, though It lends Existence to them, remains Itself as a mere Witness.

“I am the Witness” (*Sakshi*)—He is considered a true Witness of an incident, who is not in the incident, but who happened to witness, from not too afar, with neither any attachment nor any aversion towards what it looked at. When things happen of their own accord in one’s presence then one becomes the witness of that happening. The Infinite is but a witness of the finite inasmuch as the Self is an uninterested Illuminator of what is happening in the harem of the intellect, in the arena of the mind, in the courtyard of the body, and in the wide expanse of the world without.

“I am the abode” (*Nivasah*)—Truth is the House of All: of every being and thing. On an innocent way-side post, it is reported that some travellers saw a grinning-ghost, others a smiling-ghost, yet others, a ghost with bleeding mouth and sparkling eyes naked and horrid, and so me an innocent-ghost dressed in white invitingly smiling and lovingly guiding them on the right track. All of them saw delusory projections of their own individual minds upon the same way-side post. Naturally, the post is the Abode, of the smiling, of the grinning, of the bleeding, of the horrid, and of the tender ghosts that different minds at different occasions projected upon the same post. Similarly, wherever our equipments of experiences gain the apprehension of the pluralistic phenomena, for all of them the Self, the Awareness, is the *abode*, the place of existence and security.

“I am the Refuge” (*Saranam*).....Delusion breeds sorrows. Knowledge emanates joy. The universe is pain-ridden because it is delusion-projected. Naturally, the harbour of tranquility, protecting a confused ego from the mountainous breakers of the open stormy ocean-of-Samsar is the rediscovery of the Substratum, the Essence, the Self. When once the Self gets individualised, when it walks out in its own glory to identify with and play through the equipments of the intellect, mind and body, it is wandering away from its safety shore into the stormy high-seas of adventure. The frail boat of the ego when thus threatened from all sides—

the darkening clouds above, the bumping sea below, and the screaming storms all round—the sailor's only refuge is to come back to the harbour, the Self, the Tranquil.

The above descriptions put together adds up to give the conception of the Reality as a heartless Noumenon, a dignified Deity, an un-approachable realm of Perfection, afar and impossible that lies at a crude point of disgusting distance. To wipe off this idea, from the tender heart of the emotional seekers—and Arjuna was one—the Eternal, in the form of a beloved friend of man, Krishna, is using here the more humanely terms in defining himself. "I am the friend" (*Suhriith*)—The Infinite is a friend, of the finite; not a nodding acquaintance—from whom you can borrow a match-box. he will give, smile and move off—but an all-out friend, whose only anxiety is for the security and the well-being of the befriended.

"*I am the Origin and Dissolution, the Substratum, the Store-house*"—As gold in all ornaments, as mud in all pots, the Self is in the Universe, and, therefore, all things can come to manifestation and dissolve into the unmanifest only from and on the substratum, which can be, hence, considered as 'the store-house' of all names, forms and qualities that constitute the multiple world.

"*I am the Immutable Seed*" (*Bheejam Avyayam*)—There is a contrast here with all other seeds, where, in all cases, the seeds perish while they germinate and produce the trees. The Self, is no doubt, the Origin of the "Tree of *Samsar*," but in the production of this, the Self is not transformed, It being Immutable. The idea of the Eternal Principle, modifying itself to become the created world, is a disgrace to the logic of human thinking, and Vedanta discards such a philosophically falacious notion. The Non-dualists, however, are compelled to take it up, or else the very edifice of their arguments will crumble down like the castles of clouds, built upon an autumnal sky.

This, as we have already indicated, is a verse replete with simple terms, each an avenue for the meditator to reflect upon, and in a pleasant stroll reach up to the gate-way of Truth.

Further :—

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।

अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च मदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ १९ ॥

19. *tapamy aham aham varsam
nigrhnamy utsrjami ca
amrtam cai va mrtyus ca
sad asac ca ham arjuna*

तपामि - Give heat, अहम् - I, अहम् -I, वर्षम् - rain,
निगृह्णामि - withhold, उत्सृजामि - send forth. च - and,
अमृतम् - immortality, च - and, एव - also, मृत्युः death,
च - and, सत् - existence, असत् -non-existence, च-and,
अहम् - I, अर्जुन - O Arjuna.

19. (As sun) I give heat ; I withhold and send forth
the rain, I am Immortality and also Death ;
both Existence and Non-Existence, O Arjuna.

To indicate that the Self is the Essence not only in the equipments of worship and in the acts divine, but that it is the ruling Factor and the Absolute Essence behind all phenomenal objects and happenings in the universe, this stanza is given.

“ *I give heat* ”—The Electricity can rightly say that it gives heat in the heater, light in the bulb, cold in the frigidire, because, electricity conditioned through those equipments expresses itself in the manifestations as the above mentioned heat, light and cold. Similarly, the Self, the one Existence,

identifying with the phenomenon called the Sun becomes the source of all heat for the entire universe.

"I withhold and send forth rain"—Not only the modern meteorologists understand the influence which the sun has upon the climatic conditions of the world, but the great Rishis of old too had a perfect knowledge of the ways and behaviours of nature, and had well understood that the position, condition, and nature of the sun determined the climate that comes to bless or curse the world. The influence of the sun, controls the fields of experience of every living creature on the globe, since it controls the climatic conditions. If the sun were to send out a few more degrees of heat the entire flora and fauna of the world must change. So too will be the transformation, complete and total, of the entire look of the world, if the sun were to withhold even a few callories of heat that it is emitting out now. Immediately, there will be a march of the north pole and the south-pole towards the equator, driving men and beings towards the central belt of the globe, causing more intense sorrows of over-population and lack of sufficient food !

These imaginary possibilities are here indicated, only to help the student realise the scientific truth that is at the base of this passage, which a modern man, in his vanity of knowledge, might ignore as a poetic exaggeration. It is to be noted very carefully that the Rishis expressed even scientific truths in their instinctive language of poetry in all our ancient literature. Nowhere else in the world had any people tried ever, in the history of man, to express precise sciences as physics or chemistry, medicine or mathematics, in metrical composition as the *Aryans* had done.

"I am Immortality and also Death"—If life were not illumining experiences it will become meaningless and purposeless, and the Self, being the Spark of life, is the essential stuff that gives a realistic experience of existence to the very phenomenon of death. To realise the Self, as the Immutable

and the Eternal is to reach the State of Immortality. Change is death, and, therefore, the phrase is to be understood as saying that “the Self is the illuminator of change, Itself ever the Changeless.”

“*I am the Existence and the Non-existence*”—To perceive and experience ‘Existence’ and ‘Non-Existence’, a positive illuminator of both is necessary, and the illuminating Consciousness must be able to embrace both *Sat* and *Asat* in its all-comprehending Knowledge. It is impossible to know and gain an experience of the Total-non-Existence; wherever we experience non-Existence we experience it as “the non-Existence that exists.”

Apart from this highly subtle philosophical interpretation claimed by the volcanic logic of the pedantic, there is a simpler significance for the phrase. *Sat* and *Asat* are terms used in Vedanta to indicate the cause and effect: the unmanifest and the manifest. The Self being that Illuminating Factor—without which neither can we experience the unmanifest nor the manifest—the Self Eternal is conceived of as the Essence in both the manifest and the Unmanifest. Without the mud, no pot is possible; with mud all pots can exist; and, therefore, the mud can claim, “I am the pots of all sizes, shapes and colour.”

This stanza can provide life-time inspiration for the meditators at their seat of contemplation, while “barrelling their thoughts,” before shooting forth into the Voiceless and Nameless.*

Those who devote themselves in the worship of the Eternal with desires, will come to their fulfilment. How?

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा

यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्त ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक

मश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ २० ॥

* Refer Swamiji's “Meditation & Life” (3rd Edition).

20. *traividya mam somapahi putapapa
yajnair istva svargatim prarthayante
te punyam asadya surendralokam
asnanti divyan divi devabhogan*

त्रैविद्या - The knowers of the three Vedas, माम् - me, सोमपाः - the drinkers of Soma, पूतपापाः - purified from sin, यज्ञैः - by sacrifices, इष्ट्वा - worshipping, स्वर्गतिम् - way to heaven, प्रार्थयन्ते - pray, ते - they, पुण्यम् - holy, आसाद्य - having reached, सुरेन्द्रलोकम् - the world of the Lord of Gods, अस्नन्ति Eat (enjoy), दिव्यान् - divide. दिवि - in heaven, देवभोगान् - the divine pleasures.

20. The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of Soma, purified from sin, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the way to heaven ; they reach the holy world of the Lord-of-the-Gods and enjoy in heaven the divine pleasures of the Gods.

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोके विशालं
क्षीणे पुण्यमर्त्यलोके विशान्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्नाः
गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ २१ ॥

21. *te tam bhuktva svargalokam visalam
ksine punye martyalokam visanti
evam trayidharmam anuprapanna
gatagatam kama kama labhante*

ते - They, तम् - that, भुक्त्वा - having enjoyed, स्वर्गलोकम् - heaven-world, विशालम् - vast, क्षीणे - at the exhaustion of, पुण्ये - (in) merit, मर्त्यलोकम् - the world of mortals, विशन्ति - enter, एवम् - thus, त्रयीधर्मम् - of the three Vedas, अनुग्रपन्ना - abiding by, गतागतम् - the state of going and returning, कामकामा - desiring desires, लभन्ते - attain.

21. They, having enjoyed the vast heaven-world, when their merits are exhausted, enter the world of the mortals ; thus abiding by the injunctions of the three (Vedas), desiring (objects of) desires, they attain to the state of "going and returning" (*Samsar*).

Those are well-read in the three *Vedas* and know the prescription laid down for the rituals when they perform those sacred acts of devotion and sacrifice with a desire to enjoy the celestial bliss, "*they come to enjoy in heaven the divine pleasures of the Devas.*"

The *Soma* drink is the milky juice of a climbing plant* which is used in the rituals and taken in very small quantities at the end of the function. Thus, the phrase "*drinking the Soma juice*" is to be understood as 'when the performance of the ritual has concluded'.** These desire-prompted ritualisms yield their finite results and Krishna indicates these ego-centres after having enjoyed in the celestial realms, "*they enter the mortal world on exhaustion of their merits*".

The pitiable disgust which the Lord feels for such men and their unintelligent seeking for the finite, is clearly expressed

*Perhaps, belonging to the group of ephedra or periploca.

** Something equivalent to what we mean in the modern times when we say, "when they have finished their small coffee". We mean 'when the dinner-party has come to a close.

when he concludes how these ritualists, “*abiding by the injunctions of the three Vedas, desiring desires, they repeatedly come and go*”. This passage reminds us of a more severe criticism the Lord had raised earlier* against the pursuit of desire-born ritualisms.

What about those then who worship the Eternal with the desireless love as the Substratum for the entire Universe?

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ २२ ॥

22. *ananyas cintayanto mam*
ye janah paryupasate
tesam nityabhiyuktanam
yogaksemam vahamy aham

अनन्याः - Without others, चिन्तयन्तः - thinking, माम् - me, ये - who, जनाः - men, पर्युपासते - worship तेषाम् - of them, नित्याभियुक्तानाम् - of the ever self-controlled, योगक्षेमम् - the supply of what is not already possessed, and the preservation of what is already possessed, वहामि - carry, अहम् - I.

22. To those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever self-controlled, I secure which is not already possessed (*yoga*) and preserve what they already possess (*Kshema*).

So far we have been listening to almost the half of Geeta. This stanza is sandwiched between the earlier half

* II—42-45.

and the later half of this pregnant discourse on life and its problem. This wondrous book, the incomparable scripture of man, has to provide an explanation for the world and its problems, and must show us means of winning the goal of success both here and in the hereafter. The function of a religion is not over, merely because it is explaining the why and the whereof of life, and because it is indicating a goal, at once Infinite and Transcendental. An enduring religion must be a complete science of Life which should indicate an exhaustive scheme of living the actualities of life and meeting efficiently the day-to-day problems of existence in the world of plurality.

Here is a stanza which, with equal emphasis, discloses a secret by which glorious success can be assured for the spiritual and the material seekers. It is significant that this stanza is almost in the centre of the Geeta.* We shall try to follow both implications, spiritual as well as secular, of this stanza one by one.

This stanza, viewed in the context of a seeker's spiritual practices, is, no doubt, a logical conclusion of what has been so far said in the Geeta. "*Persons who meditate on Me, with undivided heart*"—where the term '*Ananya*' is available for more than one interpretation: (a) it can indicate a meaning as '*non-separate*', in which case the term will be qualifying the goal, and therefore, the passage will mean, "those who worship the Self, as not separate from their own essential Self"; (b) again, '*Ananya*' can yield a meaning as '*without any other*', in which case the term will be qualifying the mind of the seeker at the time of his

* The general belief that this is in the geometrical centre is evidently false, this being the 360th stanza out of the total 701 stanzas in Geeta. However, this traditional belief has crept among us and we can hear it repeated from all platforms, from all vocal commentators of Geeta.

worship and, therefore, the meaning will be “those who worship Me with all their thoughts”—with an entirely single-pointed mind.

Those who with a single-pointed mind, thus meditate upon Me as the one and the only Reality behind the entire universe, Krishna promises here that “*to them ever self-controlled, I bring Yoga and Kshema*”, meaning more and more spiritual vigour (*Yoga*) and the final experience of Beatitude (*Kshema*) which is liberation resulting from the *Yoga* fulfilled.

Now, considering it as a tip for man in the marketplace, sweating and toiling in the world, the very same stanza yields a code of secret instructions by which he can assure to himself complete success in his worldly life. In any great undertaking, if man is capable of pouring out his self-willed thought (*sankalpa*) constantly and with a singleness-of-purpose, he is sure to succeed. But unfortunately, the ordinary man is not capable of keeping his thoughts successfully, in one channel of thinking. His goal seems to be ever receding and flickering. His determination to win a particular goal ever changes, since his goal itself seems to be ever-changing. To such a man of haphazard determination, no progress is ever possible in any line of undertaking.

The greatest tragedy of the age seems to be that we ignore the obvious fact that thoughts alone create and not mere activities. Activities gain a potency from the thought-power that feeds them. When the feeding behind is choked and dissipated, the executing power in the external activities becomes feeble in strength and in efficiency. Thoughts, from single-pointed mind, must flow steadily in full aspiration, enthusiasm and vigour towards the determined goal which the individual has chosen for himself to gain in his life.

Mere thinking in itself is not sufficient. No doubt, actions are necessary. Many of the present-day youths even when they are capable of consistently keeping a goal of life in their view-point, they are not ready to get into the field and act as best as they can for the achievement of the same. The term '*Upasana*' means worship. Through worship we invoke the deity "the profit potential in any given field"*, and the prefix (*Pari*) to this familiar term '*Upasana*', indicates a total-effort in which no stone is left unturned in meeting the obstacles of life while carving out one's own victories in any given field of endeavour.

So far, two main secret factors were revealed, without which success in life is not assured : (a) *consistency of willing and thinking*, and (b) *pouring out ourselves with singleness of purpose* in meeting the situation in all its entirety. The second line gives a hint at the third main factor that is unavoidable in the constitution of one who is marked out in life for spectacular success and brilliant gains : and the third assuring factor is (c) *self-control*.

As an aspiring individual, consistently maintainig his ambition in his mind, walks out into his fields of activity to battle with its problems, he will meet with many a tempting channel of preoccupation through which he could dissipate himself and get exhausted rendering himself incapable of conquering the highest. To keep oneself *self-controlled* so that he may not get himself derailed, as he shoots forward to reach the temple of his success, is the third great factor that is to be kept in mind and lived fully in order that the success in life be assured.

The terms '*Yoga*' and '*Kshema*' defined as "the power to gain (*Yoga*) and the power to guard (*Kshema*)" by

* The Yagna spirit in which the actions are to be undertaken, as explained in Chapter IV.

Sankara in his commentary**, and quite applicable in the context of our discussion. In life, all conflicts and contests, all struggles and sorrows, whatever be the form in which they may appear, always different from individual to individual, from place to place, and from time to time, all of them can distinctly fall into two groups, as (a) the struggles to gain and (b) the efforts to guard what have been gained. These two tensions tear into bits the joy and tranquility of life. One, without these two preoccupations, is the luckiest, in the sense that he has gained all that is to be gained; and when these two factors are totally blotted off from one's life, he is dead to the world of sorrows—he is awake to the world of joy imperishable.

It is promised here by the Lord that one who is capable of maintaining the above described three factors and pursues them diligently, to him there need not be either the anxiety to gain or the worry to guard, because, these two responsibilities will be voluntarily undertaken by the Lord Himself. Here the term Lord may be understood as the Law behind the world of plurality and the happenings therein. When water is let out from a height for purposes of irrigating the lower planes, we have only to allow the water to flow in the right direction to reach the required area—and nature will carry the water down, for, it is the 'law of nature' that water flows always seeking for a lower level. Similarly here, 'one who is working, fulfilling in himself the three great laws pertaining to the physical, mental and intellectual disciplines, to him success need not be a consideration at all, for, victory shall dog the heels of such a mighty ruler of circumstances.

Opening up a new section to discuss the mis-guided worshippers who adore at the altars of the deity, presiding over finite material gains, the following is said :

* * "Yogo apraptasya-prapanam, Kshemah tath-rakshnam" 'Sankara.

येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ २३ ॥

23. *ye py anyadevatabhakta*
yajante sraddhaya nvitah
te pi mam eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhipurvakam

ये - Who. अपि-even, अन्यदेवता - other Gods, भक्ताः - devotees, यजन्ते - worship, श्रद्धया - with faith, अन्विताः - endowed, ते - they, अपि - also, माम् - Me, एव - alone, कौन्तेय - O Kaunteya, यजन्ति - worship, अविधिपूर्वकम् - by the wrong method.

23. Even those devotees, who endowed with faith, worship other Gods, worship Me alone, O son of Kunti, by the wrong method.

In the world it is noticed that all do not worship at the same altar. Not only that this is physically impossible, but it is psychologically absurd, since tastes differ from person to person.

The devotees at their respective worship at the different altars adore the same Vitality that is the Substratum for the created world of change. Even when they do worship different deities, when their devotion is sufficiently reinforced with perfect faith, they too are invoking, nothing but the one Eternal Truth expressed through the forms of their adoration. When once we accept the Infinite Reality as 'One-without-a -

second' remaining the same in the past, present and future, it is evidently clear that the Self, as Consciousness—that expressed through the equipments of all Saints and Sages, Prophets and Incarnations of the past—is one and the same, whatever be the clime in which they happened to be born and function among their people at their time.

Toleration is the very breath of the Hindu creed. And we have already discussed earlier how Non-dualists, accepting the Absolute as Infinite, cannot but be tolerant: and intolerance is the very bread and butter of those who accept a single Prophet as God and the Ultimate. Even among the Hindus all those who worship as members of a creed or a sect are generally found to be unrelenting fanatics and some crude examples are even noticed wherein the devotee of one deity believes that to raise blasphemies against the deities of others is adoration of his own beloved Lord. These are mere perversions, obnoxious and vulgar, which have no sanction in the Bible of the Hindus or anywhere in the cultural tradition initiated by the Rishis.

The large-heartedness and endless love in the heart of Krishna declares here that “*They too worship Me alone, even though by wrong methods*”.

The stanza, viewed as an instruction for the external life in the work-a-day world, suggests that, instead of seeking the infinite profit of the Bliss of Self-hood, those devotees who are trying to invoke other limited gains in the different fields of human activity, they too are seeking to invoke the Grace of the Self—only “*by the wrong methods*”.

Even the most sensuous, when he is planning to earn, to save and to spend, so that he may procure, possess and enjoy a sensuous object, he is also invoking the dormant capacities that lie in the Self in him. Sans Self none will be able to act

negatively or postively. Even in the act of a suicide preparing his death, he is invoking the Life, inasmuch as even in the work of raising a weapon against himself, he is but misusing the Grace of manifested Life in him.

Here in the context, the phrase “ *by the wrong methods* ” only indicates that they are wrong means, because ultimately they lead the seekers to the wells of dejection and sorrow that lie in the darkness of the not-Self instead of to the Bliss-of-perfection which is the nature of the Self.

Why do we call their methods as “ against what the law ordains ? ”

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।

न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥ २४ ॥

24. *aham hi sarvayajnanam ,
bhokta ca prabhur eva ca
na tu mam abhijananti
tattvena tas cyavanti te*

अहम् - I, हि - verily, सर्वयज्ञानाम् - of all sacrifices,
भोक्ता - enjoyer, च - and, प्रभुः - Lord, एव - alone, च -
and, न - not, तु - but, माम् - Me, अभिजानन्ति - know,
तत्त्वेन - in essence (or in reality), अतः - hence, च्यवन्ति -
fall, ते - they.

24. (For) I alone am the enjoyer in and the Lord of all sacrifices ; but they do not know Me in Essence, and hence they fall (return to this mortal world).

To explain why these methods are “against what the law ordains” (“*A-Vidhipoorvakam*”), and why pursuers of these wrong methods fall—meaning, return to the world of men when they have finished enjoying the ephemeral joys which are the rewards for the merits acquired by them through their ritualism—this stanza is given here.

In all ritualistic sacrifices, the Self alone is “*the enjoyer and the Lord*”. It is the Self in one form or the other expressing some special power or other, that forms the different deities, for the invocation of whom the various sacrifices are performed by the seekers of their grace. Here the Lord says “I am the immutable Reality that is behind all the deities that are invoked during every sacrifice with faith and devotion, be it in a Temple or Church, Mosque or Synagogue. But because they invoke “limited potentials in Me” (*Devata*) they do not come to realise “My Infinite Glory revelling as their Self,” and, therefore, bumping from one worship to another, they slip down to fall into delusory confusions and endless entanglements.

Applying it in life, in all fields of activity wherein men strive (*Yjna*), they are invoking some finite profit or other (*Deity*) and do not strive to improve culturally and come to re-discover the Self as their own essential nature, and, therefore, treading on the slippery slopes of sensuality they fall into the levels of brutal animalism and prove themselves a disgrace to the dignity and status of man-hood.

Complete happiness and satisfaction, perfect contentment and peace, lie only in the innermost walls of the bosom and not in the extrovert fields of profit and success, glory and fame. Not understanding this enduring profit that lies in the immediate within of each bosom, men, bitten by a thousand scorpions of desires, run rabid bringing about chaos and sorrows not only to themselves but to others walking the same road. Necessarily when a generation of such deluded people come to live, freely encouraging their own mental

weaknesses and never caring to pause and estimate their own profits, the history of that period can be written only upon the face of a blasted world with the very blood of the killed and maimed—diluted to taste with the tears of the bereaved mothers and widows. Indeed, they return to fall back to the sorrows of the mortal (*Cyavantite*).

How can we say that even those who are invoking the Eternal by methods which the Law does not ordain come to enjoy their certain fruits ! Listen :

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितृन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।

भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ २५ ॥

25. *yanti devavrata devan
pitrn yanti pitrvratah
bhutani yanti bhutejya
yanti madyajino pi mam*

यान्ति - Go, देवव्रता - worshippers of the Devas or Gods, देवान् - to the Devas, पितृन् - to the Pitris or ancestors, यान्ति - go, पितृव्रताः - worshippers of the Pitris, भूतानि - to the Bhutas, यान्ति - go, भूतेज्याः - the worshippers of the Bhutas, यान्ति - go, मद्याजिनः My worshippers, अपि - also, माम् - to Me.

25. The worshippers of the Devas or Gods go to the Devas ; to the *Pitris* or ancestors go the ancestor-worshippers ; to the *Bhutas* or the elementals go the worshippers of the *Bhutas* ; but My worshippers come to Me.

It is an eternal principle in life that as you think so you become. The thoughts maintained by an individual, defines him for the future periods of his life. The thoughts entertained at a given moment get themselves crystallised to form the blue-print for the individual's character formation in the days to come. This is a fact, very well realisable to everyone in his own life. Applying this natural law of psychology in the field of spiritual self-development, Lord Krishna says "Votaries of the *Devas* go to the *Devas*" etc. The worshippers of the *Devas*, ancestors (*Pitrus*) and the Elements (*Bhootas*) as a result of their worship and adoration with single-pointed mind for a sufficiently long time, come to attain the fruition of their constant meditation.

In the old style, commentators would explain that the devotee of a particular Deity reaches to an experience where he can come to live the citizenship in his Lord's own world. This constricted explanation throws a veil of mystery over the stanza. A much more liberal interpretation can easily carry to us a more deeper conviction.

Devas, we have seen, represent in our individual life the various sense-organs, through the activities of which we experience the world. To indicate the work done, by the term denoting the instrument with which the work is executed, is rather too common in life. To axe, to scissor, to knife, to spanner, to steer, to pen, etc., are examples wherein the name of the instrument is used to indicate the work done by it. Similarly, here also, the plural noun '*Devas*' may be taken to mean the entire field of all physical experiences. Those who are courting the external world of joys and successes consistently and with the required amount of devotion, they come to gain that field of their demanded experience.

The term '*Pitru*' means ancestors. It is the belief that the dead, in order to enjoy the merits which they had acquired in their individual life, through living a consistent and devoted life of the ordained *Karmas*, on leaving their physical embodi-

ments, retire for a limited period to a realm of bliss and joy called the "World of Ancestors". After enjoying there for a period of time, at the exhaustion of their acquired merits, they are traditionally believed to come down again to the mortal world. This conception is insisted upon by the orthodox commentators and in reading such a meaning into this stanza the larger imports of Geeta as a Text-book of instruction for the cultivation of a higher culture, are sadly lost.

Accepting the term '*Pitru*' as denoting the 'ancestors', "Votaries of ancestors" would mean persons enthusiastically alive to the cultural purity and tradition of their ancestors and who are striving to live up to those ideals. Such an individual who is constantly endeavouring to live up to the ancient cultural tradition of the spiritual India as the result of his constant self application, he comes to gain the beauty and the shine of the exquisite life of purity and perfection.

"*The worshippers of Bhutas reach the Bhutas*", is a line which is usually known as explaining the lower spiritual practice indicated in our text-book called The "*Prakiriti Laya*". This extremely technical meaning, read into this phrase, again destorys the magnitude of application of Geeta as a book for man's redemption.

The ancient Seers of our land did not overlook the fact that apart from the spiritual aims, in any society there was also a life of active scientific enquiry and repeated discoveries that were possible among the folds of Mother Nature's own garments. The active quest in the field of objective sciences is a part of man's hunt for knowledge and, therefore, the '*Bhutas*' are the secular scientists who try to observe, codify and systemize the observed knowledge of the physical nature and behaviours of things and beings as it is now done under such classifications as physics, Chemistry, Biology, Zoology, Botony, Engineering, Agriculture, Politics, Sociology, Geography, History, Geology and so on—an endless array of specialised lines, of investigation, adopted,

pursued and accepted by the modern world. Almost a large portion of the *Atharvana Veda* gave us the accepted theories of nature and its behaviour, as finally conceived of by the Rishis of that time. The psychological theory, which Krishna is here observing, is applicable to all branches of human endeavor—that if one were to diligently pursue in courting nature even in the secular field, success is assured in direct proportion to the amount of self-application put forth by the seeker.

If thus consistency of meditation upon the *Devas* yields the *Devas*; if constant meditation upon the ancestors takes us to our ancestral heritage; and if diligent self-application in the fields of intellectual enquiry can ultimately assure us a positive success in ripping open the secret vaults of nature—then, under the same principle, we are assured that, “*My votaries come unto me*”. By constant meditation with a single pointed mind upon the Nature of the Self, the meditator can in the long run, successfully discover his total identity with the Self, Eternal and Immutable. In our elementary textbooks of Vedanta, this technique of Ego’s constant meditation on the Self and ultimately its becoming to be the Divine Self, has been indicated by comparing it with the progress by which a worm is transformed as a buffer by the buffer-bee.*

Earlier Arjuna was advised upon the necessity of developing a single-pointed attention, after he can start his cultural rehabilitation. With the concentration so developed, through the different methods indicated, Lord suggested how Arjuna should strive to maintain his mind, even while diligently working in the field of his world of duties, keeping himself in constant remembrance of the Lord. A mere student of philosophy may wonder at the efficacy of such a simple Yogic technique especially when the student is fed upon the misunderstood overemphasis upon *Tapas* and meditation as explained in the Vedic lore. The attempt of Geeta is to give not only the *Gyana* but it is to supply *Vigyana* also. In order

* Bhramara Keeta Nyaya

to convince the student, that this elementary technique can take the seeker to the highest achievements, this stanza is given. Just as consistent pursuit with all dedicated self-application brings sure success in the end in all fields of activity, like the field of culture and of science so too, in the realm of the within, and ultimately in the field of spiritual achievements, constant meditation will definitely pay. The logic behind this assuring belief is given here by the Lord.

Can mere worship with devoted thoughts, however sincere, bring about such an absolute success? Is it not necessary that we should pursue all the elaborate rituals that the Vedas prescribe, and often seem to insist upon? Listen :

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६ ॥

26. *Patram puspam phalam toyam
yo me bhaktya prayacchati
tad aham bhaktyupahrtam
asnamī prayatatmanah*

पत्रम् - A leaf, पुष्पम् - a flower, फलम् - fruit, तोयम् - water, यः - who, मे - to Me, भक्त्या - with devotion, प्रयच्छति - offers, तत् - that, अहम् - I, भक्त्युपहृतम् - Offered with devotion, अश्नामि - eat (accept), प्रयतात्मनः - by the pure-minded,

26. Whoever offers Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, that I accept offered by the pure minded, with devotion,

No religion in the world is there which does not recognise and encourage offerings by the devotees. The modern-educated man is rather surprised at why the Infinite Lord, in all religions, needs insignificant things like a spoon of oil for His lamp, or a candle, or even an edifice to house Himself—be it a church, a mosque, or a temple. Dreary intellects, poisoned with their own misunderstanding, have even come to shamelessly insist that these Houses of Gods should be converted into hospitals and schools, lunatic asylums and maternity homes.*

But I believe that I am talking to a world which has not come to this depth of depravity. Not yet. In such a society where there is still the play of healthy hearts and virulent intellects, there is certainly a need for temples, and worship. And in these Houses of Gods, it is not the elaborateness of the ritual nor the intricacies of design nor the splendour of gold and wealth exhibited, nor even the number of devotees attending, that contribute to their essential success. Geeta was written at a time when ritualisms had become too elaborate that the then Hinduism became not available for the ordinary. The simple folk were left with no field to satisfy their spiritual quest.

Arjuna was one of those confused members of the then society who had in him the ritualistic faith deeply ingrained and when Krishna was giving the simpler method of intense self-application. Arjuna was all the more confused. To him

*I for one, rather sympathise with them, and will certainly declare that their wishes are perfectly justifiable in a society where there are more sick persons than the healthy ones, more breeding than even our highest imagination could ever believe possible, more mis-guided education than illiteracy, and more mad-ones than sane men. A society of mad-men, illiterates, or mis-educated, suffering from all possible physical ulcers, when they come to live thickly in lust and passion, breeding enormously.....in such an era of brutes worse than animals, their society needs no more temples. Certainly they need more hospitals, asylums, maternity homes and schools.

religion without ritualism was almost meaningless. To reassure Arjuna, and through the Pandava Prince the generation of devotees who would be students of Geeta, the Lord explains here that it is not *what* you offer but *how* you offer is that which guarantees the result.

Today at the various divine altars, available all over the world, it is the mortal priest who decides what the Immortal expects from the paltry pockets of the faithful! Here almost always it is more the expression of the priest's own desires rather than the demand of the Lord in the idol. In Geeta, however, we find in this stanza, the Supreme Himself expressing what would please Him the most. This statement has the assurance of something from "the horse's mouth."

The very language and diction of the stanza clearly ring the note that the material objects that one offers are of no value to the Lord of the Universe, but it is the purity and love that prompt the offering that are accepted by the Deity. Be it "*a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water,*" it is insignificant what you offer: be it a golden temple, or be it a dry leaf, "*whosoever with devotion offers*" whatever be the offering, the Lord of Brindavan assures "*that I accept*". For, when lovingly given it becomes "*a devout gift*" and when it is offered by a sincere "*pure minded*" student, the Lord has to accept it.

In bringing their offerings to any Altar, the rich very sadly misunderstands that they are patronizing the Lord of Wealth with their ephemeral gold and diamonds. If God were to be purchased, certainly the Booshwa alone can gain an entry into the heavens*.

* And even there some of them may not, because of the price of the admission ticket may, according to them, too high. while there is always complimentary ticket for everyone to enter the hell !

There are more than one carefully coined word in the stanza which explains the theory of sacrifice insisted upon in all religions. No doubt, the Absolute requires no offering at all from the finite mortal to complete Its Perfection, or to maintain Its Infinite Glory. The limited individuals try to offer at the Altar of their Lord something that they misappropriate from the Lord's own garden, the world. In a public park, the lover often pinches a flower from the neighbouring bush and offers it to his beloved. Similarly, a devotee steals something from the Lord's own Palace, and offers the same unto Him. In fact, when we thus analyse carefully we know the hollowness of the vanity of offering something unto the Lord.

And yet, this is insisted upon as an important technique in all forms of worship. In offering a flower or a fruit unto the Lord, if the devotee feels that he is making a sacrifice of the very thing that he offers, he is misusing the very act. The flower, here, serves only the purpose of a spoon in conveying something unto the Lord. While taking soup the man at the table, no doubt, lifts the spoon many times to the hungry, and at the end of the dinner the spoon remains the same as before having finished its work. The flowers or the fruits in the garden and in the temple, remain the same, but the devotee gathering and carrying them to the Altar and there when they offer them, they become the conveyors of their own love and dedication unto the Lord of his Heart.

This idea has been brought out in this stanza, when the Lord says "*that I accept.....the devout gift of the pure-minded*".

Therefore, on the whole, it is clear that an offering can be efficient, only when it is accompanied by the two required conditions (a) "with devotion offered" and (b) "when it is by the, pure-minded". To the extent these features are absent all offerings are mere economic waste and superstition-breeding false-belief. If properly done, it can serve as a good vehicle to tread the spiritual path of self-development.

Therefore .

‘यन्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददामि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्वमर्पयन् ॥ २७ ॥

27. *yat karosi yad asnasi
yaj juhosi dadasi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
tat knrusva madarpanam*

यत् - Whatever, करोषि - You do, यत् - whatever, अश्नासि - You eat, यत् - whatever, जुहोषि - you offer in sacrifice, ददामि - you give, यत् - whatever ; यत् - whatever, तपस्यसि - you practise as austerity, कौन्तेय - O Kaunteya, तत् - that, कुरुष्व - do, मर्पयन् - as an offering to me.

27. Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever you practise as austerity, O Kaunteya, do it as an offering to Me.

The stanza explains how through all activities of life one can constantly live in the spirit of “devout offering” unto the Supreme. Throughout the Geeta it has been time without number, insisted upon that the mental attitude is of supreme importance, than the mere physical act. And, this is a fact which ordinarily the seekers forget.

There are many who complain, “I wish I could offer a kingdom unto the Lord, but I have none,” Such idle complaints are being beautifully silenced in this stanza. The Lord, as the Master of all Wealth, needs nothing more than man can offer Him, He being himself the Creator and the Sustainer of all objects. All that He requires is the meek

attitude of the heart, full of devotion bent in the 'spirit of offering.' Therefore, through all activities of life and in all circumstances, if one can keep oneself in an "offering attitude" he can come to gain the peace of spiritual living.

"Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in charity, whatever you give away, or whatever austerities you practice", all these can be done as a sacred offering unto the Eternal, and thereby maintain a constant remembrance of the Supreme while living through the vanities of life.

In all actions of perception and our reaction to the perceived, be it on the physical, mental or intellectual levels, make them all a "*devout offering unto Him.*" In fact, this is not unnecessary make-belief, a mere fancied exaggeration. Nor is it in any way very difficult for an individual to practice this. The one Self revels everywhere; in the teacher, in the devotee and in the Lord. In all our life's transactions we behave, act and deal with other names and forms, and all of them we know, the Existence of the Self to uphold them. To remember the Self during all transactions of life is but to remember the Substratum. In a cloth-shop there are clothes of different colours and sizes, textures and prices, and the shop-keeper is advised to remember always that he is dealing with cotton clothings. This cannot be very difficult to any sane shop-keeper, and it will be safe and profitable too for him to remember this fact. For it would avoid him from entertaining misconceptions and thereby either charging the exorbitant prices of the woollen, or selling off his goods as cheap as gunny bags. If a gold-smith is asked to remember that he is working on gold, it is only for his own benefit.

Just as cotton is in all clothes, gold in all ornaments, the Self is the Essential Stuff in all names and forms. A devotee who can constantly remember in all his contacts in life the Divine, he alone is the one who can give to life the respect and reverence that it deserves. It is a law in life that as you

give unto life, life shall provide for you, Smile at life, the life smiles ; frown at life, the life frowns at you , approach life with due reverence and respect born out of the cognition of the Divine Essence in it, the life too shall learn to respect and revere the individual.

When all the activities are performed in the Spirit of Offering not only that our love for the Supreme increases in us, but our entire life becomes sanctified with a nobler purpose and a diviner aim. In the context of Geeta's insistence on single-pointedness of mind, and devoted contemplation of the Self, so far described, we can easily find how this stanza provides us again with an efficient and secret method by which the seekers are unconsciously made to remember the Supreme constantly—not in the deep jungles, nor in the secret caves, but right on the field of life's contentions.

What would be the effect of such a method of living life in the pure spirit of dedicated offering ? Listen :

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्षयसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥ २८ ॥

28. *subhasubhaphalair evam
moksyase karmabandhanaih
samnyasayogayuktatma
vimukto mam upaisyasi*

शुभाशुभफलैः - From good and evil fruits, एवम - thus, मोक्षयसे - (thou) shalt be freed, कर्मबन्धनैः - from the bonds of actions, संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा - with the mind steadfast in the Yoga of renunciation, विमुक्तः - liberated, माम् - to me, उपैष्यसि - (thou) shalt come.

28. Thus shalt thou be freed from the bonds of actions yielding good and evil fruits ; with the mind steadfast in the Yoga of renunciation and liberated, thou shalt come unto me.

The spiritual goal remaining the same, the Divine paths are different ; and when the different paths are explained, though they look mutually very different from each other, they all have the same scientific basis that justifies each one of them. In many places in Geeta, this fundamental basis has been brought directly to the recognition of the students, while in some few instances it is slightly veiled so that only careful students can come to recognise it. Here, in the section, we are in the midst of a discussion on how by living life in a "spirit of offering" the individual can come to claim and enjoy the highest perfection which meditation promised earlier or the Yajna-spirit guaranteed at another place.

It has been very clearly brought home to us by now* that it is the granulation made up of the past impressions in the mental zone that raise a mist in us which veils the effulgent glory of the Self in us from ourselves. To cleanse the atmosphere of the hanging dust of past impression is the duty of the seeker. The purgation of the *Vasanas* can be successfully undertaken only when the mind is allowed to act and serve freely in any given field of work without "ego and the ego-centric desires"**. Any method by which we can continue floating down on, on the stream of life without bringing into play our ego-centric arrogations would be a method of cleansing the impressions of the past actions. This conducive mental climate can be gained if we sincerely pursue the technique described above, wherein it is advised that we should strive to live the whole life as a constant love-offering unto the Lord.

* Refer Ch. III.

** Refer General Introduction.

When actions are undertaken, thus, without ego, the reactions of those actions, whether good or bad, cannot reach us since, the one to suffer or enjoy the reactions would be 'out of station' from the given bosom. The ego acts, and it is the ego that receives the reactions. If deaf man were to howl in an enclosed valley he cannot receive the echo because when the echo reaches his ears, the hearer is not therein to receive it.

Hence Bhagavan says, "*You shall be free from the bondages of actions, good or evil.*" Since the reactions arising from fresh actions do not add impressions on to the mind, and since the existing impressions get wiped out during the mind's activities in the world outside, slowly and steadily the mind gets almost a total purgation of all its existing contents. In short, the mind becomes more and more *purified*—the term being used in its scriptural sense. A purified mind has more concentration and single-pointedness.

The next stage of evolution would be that such a purified mind discovering in itself more and more discrimination learns to live a life of *Sanyasa* and *Yoga*. Both these terms are to be understood in the Geeta-way. Earlier these terms were very elaborately discussed. *Sanyasa*, renunciation, is not the physical rejection of the world but in the language of the Geeta, *Sanyasa* is renunciation of (a) all ego-centric activities and (b) all anxieties or cravings for fruits of actions. These two effects would be natural in one who is striving diligently in the world as an expression of his love for the Lord, and only to dedicate in the end all the results unto the Lord as 'offering'.

One who has come to live the Geeta-*sanyasa* and has developed thereby a pure mind full to the brim sweetened with discrimination, to him *Yoga* natural—especially so because all through the hours of his activity he is constantly remembering the Self, the Infinite.

Naturally, such a seeker discovers to himself that his earlier identifications with the false and the consequent sense of limitations and pains of mortality fall off from him and he discovers himself to be of his Divine Nature. "*By practice and renunciation you shall find release and come to Me*",

The steady logic of thought that can be detected running all through the Geeta by every careful student, gives it the dignity and status of a text-book of science in the world's literature. Nowhere in Geeta is a slipshod expression which grates against its rhythmic flow of thought. At certain moments the obvious meaning of some stanzas may give us a false jerk; but such stanzas we feel are deliberately kept there to make the student more and more sincerely think for himself and discover the harmony and rhythm of thought that are so beautifully veiled by such stanzas.

*The seeker is promised that he will go to the Supreme.
What then is the nature of the Self?*

समो ऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेषो ऽस्ति न प्रियः ।

ये भजन्ति तु माम्भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥ २९ ॥

29. *samo ham sarvabhutesu
na me dvesyo sti na priyah
ye bhajanti tu mam bhaktiya
mayi te tesu ca py aham*

समः - The same, अहम् - I, सर्वभूतेषु - in all beings,
न - not, मे - to me, द्वेषः - hateful, अस्ति - is, न - not,
प्रियः - dear, ये - who, भजन्ति - worship, तु - but, माम् -
Me, भक्त्या - with devotion. मयि - in Me, ते - thy, तेषु -
in them, च - and, अपि - also, अहम् - I.

29. The same am I to all beings; to Me there is none hateful or dear; but those who worship me with devotion, are in me and I am also in them.

Like in all ordinary religions, there is in the Geeta, no make-belief God-Principle for the mental consolation of the devotees. Geeta caters to neither the weaknesses in man nor to the glories of the Perfection. It is a scientific literature describing without fear or favour, the Truth, and nothing but the Truth. The stanza under review is a brilliant example of this characteristic feature of the statements in the Geeta.

The Self is one in all beings; the same Conscious Principle illuminates the emotions and thoughts in all bosoms of all living creatures. "*I am in all beings*". The same Sun illuminates all objects in the world and its rays get reflected on all surfaces—be it upon the dull, rough surface of a rock, or the bright polished facet of a jewel.

"*To Me there is none hateful or dear*"—If the same Self, revels in Krishna and Buddha, Sankara and Christ, in a lunatic and a murderer, in the good and the bad, why is it that some are able to recognise the divine status of the Self and the others live like worms? In the emotional literature, expounding the *Bhakti-cult*, there is always the sentimental explanation that it is because under Lord's direct grace some come to manifest a greater amount of divinity. This theory may be satisfactory to the few, who do not bring their reasoning capacity into the field of religious discussion. But to an intelligent few, this explanation spells absurd, inasmuch as the Supreme would have to be considered as exhibiting partiality among the world of the living beings. To negate this imperfect explanation and to express the purely scientific theory, Krishna here declares the Truth that the Self is the same everywhere always, and that to the Self there is no distinction between the good

and the bad ; the Self entertains neither a particular love nor any special hatred for any of the living beings.

This should not be understood as meaning that the Self is an impotent factor, inert and emotionless, with no capacity in Itself to bless or to help. Employing the analogy of the sun-light, which we have already examined, the idea implied here can be better understood. Even though the same sun-light reflects itself upon the different types of objects in the world it is true that the quality and the nature of the reflecting surface will determine the clarity and the intensity of the light reflected. On a dull piece of rough stone there will be the least amount of light reflected, while in a bright-clean and polished mirror there will be perhaps the maximum reflection.

Because of this difference, sun-light cannot be accused of having special love for the mirror, or a disgust for the rough, surface. Applying the analogy to the subjective life, it becomes clear that if the spiritual strength and beauty get reflected more through the golden-hearts of the rare few and do not at all get reflected through the iron-hearts of the ordinary many, it is not because the Self entertains in Itself any preference to or any prejudice against anyone, but it is only a natural phenomenon, happening in perfect obedience to the law of the Universe.

Though, thus, in the first line there is a total negation of any relationship whatsoever between the Self and the not-Self, in the following line there is a striking idea expressed, which at first smothers the reader with its vivid contradiction. "*But those who worship Me with devotion, are in Me, and I too am in them.*" Even though the Self has neither any favour for or any prejudice against the not-Self, to the extent the not-Self "*Worship Me with devotion*" they are "*in me and I too in them,*" We generally can say that the ghost is in the post and the post is in the ghost meaning thereby the Non-dual nature of the essence and the super-

impositions upon It. Those who worship the Self with devotion come to rediscover that the worshippers themselves are nothing other than the Self that is worshipped by them.

“Those who worship Me with devotion”—This phrase can be initially understood as a mere ritualistic injunction, and it calls forth a little more closer and deeper study to realise its spiritual implications. Worship is a technique by which in essence the entire “thought-force” in the worshipper is mobilised and turned to flow towards a diviner point-of-contemplation, seeking ever in total identity with the Truth so meditated upon. When this is done in a spirit of devotion or love* the worshipper comes to realise his total oneness with his object-of-worship.

With this implied meaning well in mind, when we re-read the stanza it becomes amply clear what Krishna meant in this philosophical statement. Even though the Truth has neither a preference for nor a prejudice against any one, some noble souls come to experience and exhibit in themselves the effulgence of divinity, because, as the Lord says, they, through their devoted worship have sought and discovered their oneness with the Divine Principle, the Self.

In the Upanishads also** the same idea has been most expressly described. The idea is not that the Eternal Self has any freedom ‘to choose or not to choose’ one individual from the other; it is the individuals themselves who create such conditions in themselves, wherein they can come to rediscover the Self. Teachers of Vedanta explain this idea by a striking example of a sweet-scented lonely flower on the road-side. This flower is equally available for recognition and enjoyment for everybody passing

*We have already explained how love is nothing but seeking one's own identity with the other.

* *Discourses on Kathopanishad I-ii-23.

that spot. Many pedestraings walk along and pass by not recognising either the fragrance hanging in the atmosphere or having the vision of the beauty in the flower.

Among the passers by, a rare few approach the spot, become conscious of the fragrance, turn round to investigate its source and come to be blessed by the beauty, fragrance and the message of the solitary flower nodding among its thorny bush. Now if such individuals can be considered as 'blessed by the flower' to that extent, the Realised Soul can be considered as one who had been blessed by the Self, the Eternal.

In fact, he among the pedestrians, who had his mind preoccupied with his own market-place problems, could not come to enjoy the *grace* of the flower ; while that individual, who with his mind free from all preoccupations and alert to all available experiences, comes to live the fragrance as though through some special *grace* of the flower.

A mind, that is preoccupied with its own ego-centric attachments with the not-Self, cannot come to live the bliss of perfection, while, the same mind, when it has detached itself from its extrovert preoccupations, it becomes a ready instrument to seek and to discover its true identity with the Self. The condition of the mind declares whether an individual is confused or clear, bound or redeemed. A mind that is turned outwards, rushing out and panting to gain its satisfactions in the world-of-objects gets itself bound to the finite, and comes to groan with pain and disappointment ; while the same mind turned inward away from the objects, seeking the Self, comes to rediscover its own identity with the Spiritual Centre.

In winter within a room one suffers from cold while outside there is plenty of sunshine. The one who walks out of the room into the sun-shine comes to be blessed by the warmth of the sun while those who bury themselves in their

rooms suffer the discomforts of the cold. The sun has neither a preference for those who are basking under its rays, nor a prejudice against those who do not come under its shine and warmth. In the language of this stanza, we may call those who have walked in to the sunny courtyard as those who are “blessed” by the sun, while those who stay indoors are those that are “not blessed” by the sun.

Never does Geeta at any point in its length, encourage Man's surrender to circumstances or even to his own present debilities and incompetencies. As a Scripture of activity and optimistic endeavour, Geeta unmistakably emphasizes the ultimate independence of man over his present weaknesses and even over his present circumstances.

Is this Path of Self-discovery available only for the good? Listen :

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्य भाक् ।

माधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥ ३० ॥

30. *api cet sudnracaro
bhajate mam ananyabhak
sadhur eva sa mantavyah
samyag vyavasito hi sah*

अपि - Even, चेत् - if, सुदुराचारः - a very wicked person, भजते - worships, माम् - Me, अनन्यभाक् - with devotion to none else, साधुः - righteous, एव - verily, सः - he, मन्तव्यः - should be regarded, सम्यक् - rightly, व्यवसितः - resolved, हि - indeed, सः he,

30. Even if the most sinful worships Me, with devotion to none else, (or with single-pointedness) he too should indeed be regarded as “righteous”, for he has rightly resolved,

The practice of devotion, understood in its special meaning in which it is used in the Gæta, is glorified here by indicating its effects upon each individual practitioner. In the Geeta, *Bhakti* is self-less contemplation with a single-pointed mind upon the Non-dual Brahman considered as nothing other than the very essence of the devotee.* When this *Bhakti* is practised for a sufficiently long time, with the required intensity and sincerity, the evolution in the individual is mapped out here showing the various stages in its efflorescence.

Ordinarily there is a vague belief that a vicious sinner or a desperate criminal is an outcaste, who can never dare to enter the courtyard of the heavens. This immoral condemnation of the sinner is an unhappy mis-reading of the spirit of the vedic literature. No doubt, the Vedas condemn the sin but not the sinner. The evil ways of the sinner are all expressions of the evil thoughts in his mind, and if the texture of the thoughts, at present flowing in his mind, can be changed, the texture of his behaviour will also be transformed. One who has come to keep consistently in his mind thoughts of the Lord, in the warmth of his growing devotion, such an individual accomplishes so total a rehabilitation of his mental life that he cannot thereafter carry on his career in sin.

“Even if a wicked person worships Me”—Gæta not only throws open its gates to the sinners but the Singer of the Divine Song seems to have great missionary zeal to redeem all sinners, and he is anxious to bless them. Even those who are taken to evil ways are not debarred because of their actions and the impurity of their lives, to enter the field of spirituality. The insistence is only that the worship of the Self must be performed by the devotee with “undivided

* Read Swamiji's Talks on Vivekachudamani P—78-79. Sankara defines *Bhakti* as, “A constant attempt to live up to one's own Real Nature is called single-pointed devotion. (stanza 31)

devotion". Here the term 'undivided' (*Ananya*) can be applied both to the 'mind of the meditator' and to 'the goal meditated upon'. On the whole the phrase advises that the devotion can pay its promised dividend only when the devoted with a single-pointed mind contemplates upon a goal that is Non-dual and permanent. The Non-dual Self is not to be considered as different from the very Essence in Devotee (*Ananya*).

"*He should be regarded as good*"—Even though he had been till this day a man of evil ways, wicked and cruel, living the life of the senses, uncontrolled and passionate, even then, from the moment he has taken to the path of contemplation with devotion upon the Supreme, he is to be considered, says Krishna, as "*saintly and good*". Such a usage is common in every language, when we want to emphatically assert a state or condition to be fulfilled in the immediate future. In all such cases we claim it as a state accomplished even in the present: 'baking the bread', 'making the tea', are all examples when, even while kneading the flour or boiling the water, we call these acts with a term indicating anticipatory fulfilments. Similarly here, one who has taken to the Path Divine is called from that very moment as "good and saintly" because he will soon (*Acirāt*) grow out of himself to thrive and flourish in the vaster atmosphere of his spiritual glory.

Such an individual is to be considered good and divine "*for*", as Krishna puts it, "*he has rightly resolved*". In the Life Divine, right resolution is more important than mere routine practice. Majority of seekers whip themselves up to plod on their paths—a melancholy brood, like famished cattle troding their way to the meat-market! Such a melancholy procession can reach nowhere but a butcher's block where Time sits to hack them into pieces. The one who steadily walks the path with an iron heart of resolution, open-eyed and enthusiastic, cheerful and heroic, is the one noted for success and, therefore, the Flute-bearer emphati-

cally asserts that the rightly resolved man of evil ways is to be considered from that moment of his noble decision on as one especially marked out to be soon a most successful man-of-perfection.

*How do we know that what you are talking is not a bluff?
What exactly is the effect of such a single-pointed devotion?*

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।

कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥ ३१ ॥

31. *kṣipram bbavati dharmatma
śaśvārchantim nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānīhi
na me bhaktah pranaśyati*

क्षिप्रम् - Soon, भवति - (he) becomes, धर्मात्मा, -
righteous, शश्वन् - eternal, शान्तिम् - peace, निगच्छति -
attains to, कौन्तेय—O son of Kunti, प्रतिजानीहि - know,
न - not, मे - my, भक्तः - Bhakta. प्रणश्यति - is destroyed.

31. Soon he becomes righteous and attains Eternal
Peace, O Kaunteya, know for certain that My
devotee is never destroyed.

The logical thoughts that lie behind the daring assertion* of Krishna are being indicated in this stanza. A man of evil ways when he takes to a life of single-pointed devotion propelled by his ardent resolve, that man "*soon becomes righteous*". The term *Dharma* was already explained in the opening of our commentary as 'the Law of Being'. Just as heat is the specific quality (*Dharma*) of fire, without which fire cannot exist, the *Dharma* of man is the Divine Atman

in him without which none of his personality-layers can ever come to express of itself. Therefore, the term '*Dharmatma*' in the stanza is not fully expressed when it is translated as 'a man of righteousness'.

Single-pointed devotion and self-application develops concentration and, therefore, enhances the subtlety of reception of the mind, and such a mind finds its balance even in the highest altitudes of its meditative flights. "*In good time*," meaning ere long, he comes to gain glimpses of the Infinite experience and, thus, comes to live more and more as a dynamic saint, wafting the fragrance of divinity through his motives, thoughts and actions.

The next stage would necessarily be then, that he gets more and more established in this divine awareness of his own Infinite Glory, "*and attains Eternal Peace*". The term peace is one of the most bombarded and ill-treated terms, maximum used and little understood, in our times. Peace is not the temporary cessation of the war-condition, though we generally accept it to be so in the world. When one generation has torn into bits half the existing population, and in this effort when the victorious half gets itself maimed and broken, shattered and crushed, ulcerated and oozing, in their physical, mental and intellectual layers, there comes a dull pause, laden with the fatigue, wherein the victorious lie back to mourn for the dead and groan for its own ulcers. And this, we have learnt to call as peace, in the world.

Religion has more sternly practical and vividly healthy valuation of life to meekly accept such a bleeding interval between two death-dances as a satisfying goal of life. The peace that is indicated here is the inward peace which is beyond the thunders and storms of life, which having gained,

*Made in the previous stanza in its anticipatory assertion that a wicked person when rightly resolved must be from that moment considered as good and saintly.

the individual comes to find himself ever in an oasis in the midst of deserts, ever in a harbour in the midst of storms; ever in bliss—even when nailed on a cross or torn into bits or made to face the smoky end of a noisy gun ! !

This substantial edifice of peace which strengthens and fortifies the existence in us is the tranquility divine which we come to live as our essential being when the mind stops its mad revelry of its own agitations and excitements. There is no Religion in the world which does not point out to this goal, experientable when the mind is at rest. A still mind is the open window through which man peeps out to see himself reflected on the mirror of Truth. The term guaranteeing here that a true 'devotee soon *reaches* the Supreme Peace, is to be rightly understood as *not* a destination that lies far away from us, but that it is only a re-discovery in ourselves of our own true nature.

The perfection indicated in religions lies only as far away from us as our waking state is from our dreams. It is a question of rightly adjusting the focus . if a camera is 'out of focus' the photo snapped will give only a blurred representation of a fairy-land, while the same scene photographed by the same camera, well-focussed and adjusted, gives us its gorgeous beauty with all details in the photo. A mind and intellect mal-adjusted and incessantly getting shunted between the ever-rising waves of desires and passions is not the right instrument to cognise and discover the Truth that lies beneath the mind in the same bosom.

The second line of the stanza brings out the incomparable missionary in Krishna, who seems to explode himself with his own rising fire and enthusiasm. After declaring the truth that even a man of dire evil ways can start his pilgrimage on the very day he takes unto himself the firm resolve to educate his mind, and after indicating the stages of his growth till he reaches the Supreme Peace, the Wooer of the Gopies—here, as it were pats on the back of Arjuna—

declares "*boldy can you proclaim that My devotee is never destroyed*".

Somewhere down the sad annals of the recent Hindu History this missionary zeal has been given up, and a cold step-motherly attitude has come to be taken up by the learned pundit-class, who have come to think that to confuse their followers is the noblest of their arts! We, as children of the present age, are made to pay the highest penalties for the mistakes of the misguided past generations of unimagi-native religious leaders. Earlier also we found Krishna insisting that Arjuna should, without any reservation, declare to the world what he had understood. In the Upanishads* also during the last class-lecture and on the Convocation-day when the teacher bade farewell to his students and let them out to live in the society, they were commissioned not only to live what they had been taught and to continue educating themselves, but also to preach what they knew and what they lived.**

Toeing the line with the spirit of the Rishis, here Krishna says that Arjuna should ever declare from the house-tops the one unchallengeable truth that the seeker of the nobler values shall know no failure if his resolve is firm and he is sincere in his self-application. The special phrase, employed here to declare Krishna's advice to Arjuna (*Prathijanehi*), has in Sanskrit its own special powers of assertion and can express a shot of imperative urgency. Those, who are students of the Sanskrit language can easily perceive it; those who are not may make a note of the same.

In short, this and the previous stanza together express that one who has come to entertain constantly, at least at one corner of his mind, a continuous awareness of the

*Read Swamijis Discourses on Thythireeya Upan shad : *Siksha Valli*-Section 9 Pages 66-71; and Section 11 Page 79-85.

***Swadhyayapravachane ca.*"-Discourses On Taittireya Upanished —pages 67-68

Divine Principle and allows it to influence upon the rest of his mental field, he is the one marked out for progress and growth, both in his life within and in the life without. Just as a blue street-light throws a pool of light, irrespective of the dresses that they wear, all gather upon themselves an extra blue tinge, so too, in the bright light of the Divine Awareness even criminal thoughts rising in that mind would gather the golden hue of a godly perfection. Like the moth-balls kept in a wardrobe protect all the clothes kept therein and keep away all the worms, so too, the constant *Smaran* of the Divine Nature of the Self protects the human personality from the destructive worms of its inward negativities.

Further :

मां हि पार्थ व्यपश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।

स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परांगतिम् ॥ ३२ ॥

32. *mam hi partha vyapasritya
ye pi syuh papayonayah
striyo vaisyas tatha sudras
te pi yanti param gatim*

माम् - Me, हि - indeed, पार्थ - O Partha, व्यापश्रित्य - taking refuge in, ये - who, अपि - even, स्युः - may be पापयोनयः - of sinful birth, स्त्रियः - women, वैश्यः - Vai-shyas, तथा - also, शूद्राः - Sudras, ते - they, अपि - also, यान्ति - attain, पराम् - the Supreme, गतिम् - goal.

32. For, taking refuge in Me, they also, who, O Partha, may be of a "sinful birth"—women, *Vaishyas* as well as *Sudras*—even they attain the Supreme Goal.

As an annotation and an explanatory appendix to the immediately preceding pair of stanzas, here it is added that only those who are placed under wrong influences and unfavourable external conditions that are redeemed by the constant remembrance of the Divine, but even those who are victims of congenital mal-adjustments, both in their mental make-up and in their intellectual constitution, can also get their equipments re-adjusted and tuned up properly by the same process of constant remembrance of the Truth Eternal.

This stanza is an example of how traditional beliefs cloud the mind and make us unaware of the obvious, and pervert our understanding to read some meanings that are not there in the Scripture. At some period in the past, the healthy caste-system started deteriorating, and it fell to become iron-caskets to vivisection the community and disintegrate the harmonious growth of the Society.

Slowly knowledge came to be the monopoly of a few, and the Religion came under the proprietorship of a section of the community. Soon this section unconsciously deteriorated to such an extent, in their moral fibre and in their intellectual integrity, that they soon started interpreting the Scriptures to read into them a meaning that would fortify their prejudices and guarantee their monopoly for ever. The majority of the existing commentaries echo this false interpretation that came into vogue then.

Geeta, the Universal Scripture, which addresses itself always not to a community, nor the followers of any particular creed, but only man in general, cannot be considered as indulging in a secret intolerance to any section of the humanity. Even the preceding two stanzas clearly expressed the large-heartedness and the divine tolerance of the Universal Religion of Krishna which had proudly proclaimed that even the vicious and the men of dire evil ways can be redeemed by the Divine Baptism recommended in the Geeta.

As a consistent text-book of Scientific thought the Lord could not have all of a sudden jerked himself off from the main line of thought that he was following so far, only to express his condemnation of certain sections of the society, which together constitute, at any given period of time and place, the majority. Therefore, we will have to reject the existing interpretations available in the vast commentaries, and try to discover the original spirit in which Vyasa had expressed his ideas.

No doubt, there are expressions in the *Vedas*, in the *Puranas* and in the *Smritis*, which seemingly fall in line with the language of this stanza. To condemn woman, traders (*vaishyas*) and workers (*sudras*) as men of inferior births is equivalent to accepting that Religion has an effective influence only upon a mere handful of the members of the society. This would be a denial of what Krishna had been hammering from the opening stanza on. Therefore, we have to understand the true implications of his words as he uses them here.

Religion is not a technique of developing the physical body nor is it an art fulfilled through the physical body. The condition and status of the physical body have nothing to do with the evolutionary progress which religion is pointing out through all its preachings. The spiritual practices contribute to the integration of the mind and intellect and to their progressive unfoldment, until, in their full ripeness, they shed themselves off, leaving the Spirit naked in all its divine glory. Thus, these terms, as used in this stanza, are to be understood as indicating some special qualities of the human mind-and-intellect, manifested in varying degrees in different individuals, at different times.

The feminine minds (*Sthriyah*) are those that have a larger share of their deep affections and blinding attachments.*

* Refer Swamiji's "Talks on Vivekachoodamani"—stanza 2.

So too there are people who have a commercial attitude in all their thoughts and actions and live in their mental life as traders ; (*vaisyas*) ever calculating the profits that would be accrued for all their psychological investments. Such a calculating mind ever looking up to the profits that could be raised, is not the mental attitude in which it can easily evolve through the path of meditation. To surrender all fruits of actions is the secret of holding the mind still, and make it live vitally the Infinite that is the content of a single present moment. Thus, when the Science of Spiritual development condemns the traders, it is only a denunciation of the particular commercial tendency of their mind. Psychological personalities that can fall under the group of "traders" cannot hope to progress to schedule on the Path Divine.

Lastly, the mental attitudes of slumber and slothfulness are that which are indicated by the term "*Sudra*" here.

When once we have understood that these familiar terms of that age are borrowed by Krishna to indicate the special types of mind-intellect-equipments, we have understood the stanza rightly without pulling down the entire Geeta from its well-merited dignity as a Scripture of Man.

The verse promises that through constant remembrance of the Lord, not only all men of evil ways are redeemed, but even those, who are not walking the Path Divine because of some psychological and intellectual debilities in them, will be cured and steadily strengthened to walk efficiently the Path, if they too, with single-pointed mind and through devotion, learn to continuously remember and daily meditate upon the Divine Self.

"Born out of the womb of sin" : (*Papayonaya*)—This term qualifying women, traders and workers would be a blasphemous calumny against, atleast a majority of mankind—which is an unpardonable crime, even if the statement comes from the Divine mouth of a Prophet. And yet, with-

out blindly accepting the mere dictionary-meaning of the word, if we try to understand the philosophical import of the term we shall find therein an irreplaceable phrase which has summarised in itself volumes of the Vedantic beliefs. And also this term qualifying the women, the *vaisyas* and the *sudras* shall provide us with a confirmation that our interpretation of these words, as denoting the qualities of the mind, is fair.

Sin according to Vedanta is a wrong tendency in the mind created out of the past unhealthy thoughts and negative living. These wrong channels of thought irresistibly drive man to live false values and bring about confusion and chaos into his own, as well as into the life of others. It is these wrong tendencies ploughed on the mental field that are the sources of the feminine nature of the mind (*Sthrittvam*), or the commercial attitude of the intellect (*Vaisyathvam*), or the general dullness and the slumberous morbidity in one's inner life (*Sudrattvam*). A dull-witted pundit alone will have the necessary audacity to commit the calamitous folly of interpreting this stanza, adhering faithfully to the mere word-meaning, conveniently forgetting Sri Krishna's own definition of *Varnasharma Dharma* given previously in his discourse.*

In short, when these wrong tendencies are in the mind, the Rishis had declared, in sheer kindness, that it is useless for that mind to undertake a study of the Vedas and, therefore, it was debarred from doing so. To attain the necessary qualification for a successful study of the sacred lore the prescription is *Sadhana*. Of all the spiritual practices (*Sadhana*), the most efficient and salutary effort is the constant remembrance of the Lord with a heart flowing in love and devotion (*Upasana*). It is the Vedantic declaration that through *Upasana* the mind gets purified—purified off its

* (Ibid IV—13) Chaturvarnyam Mayasristam Guna Karma
Vibakasaha.

debilities which were classified and indicated by the terms “*women, traders and workers*”.

When once these negative qualities have been removed from a given mind, it gains in its powers of concentration, single-pointedness and balance for its flight to the very horizon of thought. When once the equipment is ready and it is rigged for the pilgrimage, the destination will soon be reached ; and, therefore, Krishna promises “even they attain the Supreme Goal”.

“*Krishna goads Arjuna to walk the Path of Self Realisation.....*”

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।

अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥ ३३ ॥

33. *kim punar brahmanah punya
bhakta rajarsayas tatha
anityam asukham lokam
imam prapya bhajasva mam*

किं पुनः - How much more, ब्राह्मणाः - Brahmins,
पुण्याः - holy, भक्ताः - devoted, राजर्षयः - Royal saints,
तथा - also, अनित्यम् - impermanent, असुखम् - unhappy,
लोकम् - world, इमम् - this, प्राप्य - having obtained,
भजस्व - worship, माम् - Me.

33. How much more (easily) then the holy *Brahmanas* and devoted Royal-saints (attain the goal) :having obtained this impermanent and joyless world you do worship Me devoutly.

If the above-mentioned mental types are highly handicapped in the race divine, Krishna here by a self-answering question, very emphatically points out how easy and almost natural must Self-realisation and the godly life be to those who have got the mental purity *Brahmin* or the big heart and stout head of the rightly determined *Rajarshi*. A king who, having enjoyed intelligently his power and wealth, in his complete satiation arising out of the growing discrimination, when he comes to experience the inward peace of true contemplation upon the Self is called a *Rajarshi*.

After thus describing all the types of "heads-and-hearts" possible in creation, and after prescribing treatment for all of them to rediscover their own Divine Nature, the Lord, concluding the Section, makes a general statement in the second line : "*Having attained this transient and joyless world, you do worship Me devoutly*". This instruction to Arjuna is an instruction for all, since in the Geeta, if Lord Krishna represents the Self, Arjuna represents the confused man standing impotent against the challenges of life.

The description of the world is given here with two simple-looking common terms very familiar in all philosophical literature of the Aryans. But the full implication is to be truly digested and assimilated by all students. The term 'Loka' in sanskrit comprises in its embrace the entire field of all possible experiences—Physical, Mental, Intellectual. One of the features of the world of experience is that all experiences, without an exception, at all times and in all places, transient in nature.

Apart from this, no experience in life gained at these different levels through the reaction of some equipment or other with one object or other, can be entirely satisfactory to any man. Nothing but the Infinite can satisfy an intelligent man totally. Continuity of experience cements the flow of the mind and temporarily negates all disturbances caused by the usual agitations in it. This condition of placid still-

ness on the surface of the mental pool creates the condition called joy, in man's life. Ordinarily such a condition of joy is created now and then in an experience when the right object in the required pattern comes within the field of a healthy instrument-of-perception.

When this equation of the objects in one hand and the instrument on the other, come to function in a favourable mental atmosphere, it creates the conditions necessary for an experienceable joy. Evidently, therefore, this artificial mental poise which yields the experience of joy cannot remain permanently, since any disturbance either in the field of objects or in the instruments or in the mental mood should upset the balance and create discord in the very harmony which the individual had experienced earlier.

The world is lived by you in a field always constituted of objects, instruments and mental moods. All these three quantities are ever in a state of change. Naturally, the flickering joys that come to us in life should prove transient. And the joys broken are the intervals of pain.

In tune with the positive philosophy of enervating optimism which the Geeta roars, Krishna here declares the world to be not a mere pit of sorrows or ditch of despairs or a mire of disappointments, but only as a field of joylessness (*Asukham*).

"Having reached this world, impermanent and joyless": Krishna advises Arjuna, that he must spend himself in the worship of the Self. In this spiritual activity, Arjuna has been well encouraged by the Lord with his statements that to a heart that has not the weaknesses natural to the lower evolute* but has a wealth of poise and understanding (*Brahmanas and Rajarshis*) which are the hall-marks of a higher evolution, success is easy and sure. Therefore "You worship Me devoutly".

* Indicated by the terms, "Women, Vaisyas and Sudras", as applied to the mental conditions.

How then am I to worship you, My Lord, when I am to face my enemies and fight my battle?

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु

मामे वैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥ ३४ ॥

34. *manmana bhava madbhakto
madyaji mam namaskuru
mam evai syasi yuktvai vam
atmanam matpara yanah*

मन्मना - With mind filled with me, भव - be you,
मद्भक्तः - my devotee, मद्याजी - sacrificer, माम् - to Me,
नमस्कुरु - bow down, माम् - to me, एव - alone, एष्यसि -
you shall come, युक्त्वा - having united, एवम् - thus,
आत्मानम् - the Self, मत्परायणः - 'taking Me as the Supreme goal

34. Fix thy mind on Me; be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me; having thus united your (whole) Self to Me, taking me as the Supreme Goal, you shall come to Me.

The stanza under review is a beautiful summary of the entire chapter inasmuch as it throws a beam of light over its shoulders to flood the entire chapter with a better understanding. We may say that this stanza especially serves as a commentary to more than one verse in the same chapter.*

*Ibid 14 & 27.

In all text-books of Vedanta the *Brahma-vidya* the technique of self-development and self-perfection through the Path of Right Knowledge and Meditation, has been defined as, "Contemplation on That, talks on That, mutually discussions on That—and thus, to live ever mentally drowned in the bliss-concept of the spiritual Reality, is called by the knowers of It, as the pursuit of the Brahman"*.

Keeping this classical definition in mind, Vyasa delineates steadily his aesthetic Path of Bhakti in this stanza. The same idea has been already brought out earlier in the chapter on more than one occasion.

With "*the mind ever filled with Me, My devotee makes all sacrifices, all salutations to Me*" at all times whatever be the type of work that engages him. In brief, the revolution of the mind is the very essence of all spiritual reformation in life. Neither the conditions in which we are, nor our circumstances and habits, nor the available ways of life, nor our past nor our present—none of these is a bar for evolving spiritually.

Constant awareness maintained diligently is the secret of success.

When thus "*you take Me as the Supreme Goal*" Krishna promises Arjuna, "*You shall come to me*". We are what we are because of our thoughts. If the thoughts are noble and divine, we become noble and divine.

*'Tat cintanam tat kathanam
Anyonyam tat prabodhanam
Yetadekaparatvam ca
Brahmabhyasam vidurbudha.'

हरिः ॐ तत् सत्
 इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां
 योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुन संवादे
 राजविद्या राजगुह्ययोगोनाम
 नवमोऽध्यायः ॥

Hari Om Tat Sat

*Ity Srimad bhagavadgitasupanishadsu
 Brahmanavidyayam yogasastre Sri Krishnarjunasamvade
 Rajavidya Rajaguhyaayogonama
 Navamodhyaya,*

Thus, in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Geetha in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture of Yoga, in the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the ninth discourse ends entitled .

THE YOGA OF ROYAL KNOWLEDGE AND ROYAL SECRET

This chapter has been rightly titled as the Chapter discussing *the Royal Knowledge and the Royal Secret*. These two terms have been already discussed at length. Earlier in the chapter* we found that, since Pure Consciousness is the Knowledge at whose light all the other conditioned-knowledges are possible, this Science, dealing with the Absolute has been rightly called as the *Royal Knowledge*. Elsewhere in the Upanishads it has been termed as the 'Knowledge of all Knowledges'** because, having known which there is nothing more to be known***

*Ibid 2.

**“‘Sarva Vidyanam, Vidya.’—‘PARA-VIDYA’—‘RAJA VIDYA

***Refer Swamiji's Discourses on Murdakopanishad :

Yasmin Vijnathe Sarvamidam Vijnatham Bhavathi’.

Part B

SREEMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA

CHAPTER X

INTRODUCTION

In any text book of systematic thought, later chapters will have their roots in the earlier statements, and the continuity of narration in and the consistency of development of the themes are both unavoidable. Although these chapters are named separately and, therefore, would look almost completely independent from each other, there is an imperceptible matrix of ideas holding them all together. Viewed thus, this chapter may be traced back to have risen from some dozen different verses in different earlier chapters. Of them the most predominant and striking source is the stanza in the seventh chapter* wherein after describing the Higher and the Lower Nature of the Eternal, the Lord concludes "*I am the origin and the dissolution of the whole Universe*"; and thus, he added "*beyond Me there is naught. All this is strung in Me as a row of jewels on a thread*".†

Having known that mud is the essence in all pots it will be but an application of that knowledge if one explains to indicate the place-of-mud in all available pots. And yet, in Science this is the method. After knowing that the circulatory system is that which collects the assimilated essence of food and distributes the same to all parts of the body, and that it is again the stream in the circulatory system that collects all the poisonous refuse in each cell and brings them

* VII—6.

† Ibid., VII—6-7.

all for purification in the lungs, the knowledge is not complete until a careful investigation is held to observe, analyse and classify the circulatory systems in different species of the living kingdom.

Similarly, here Krishna as the Self, Eternal and the All-pervading, though He is the Source of all names and forms, has to indicate to Arjuna His exact place and worth in the comity of things and beings in the Universe.

The chapter is called the *Vibhuti Yoga* inasmuch as it describes (a) the Power or Lordship and (b) the Pervasiveness or Immanence of the Self. The Self being the Essence in the world of plurality, in the descriptions contained in the chapter, we find Krishna indicating Himself both as (1) the most prominent and Chief Factor in all classes of beings and (2) as that Supreme Factor without which specimens belonging to each class cannot maintain themselves as existent beings. We will be noticing these as we dissect the stanzas one by one to discover their individual contents.

In this chapter we discover that Arjuna feels himself extremely inspired when he got his re-education in his knowledge of the Vedas, through the sparkling words of Lord Krishna. The new interpretation and phraseology seem to bring into the ancient philosophy a power to convert the sceptic and a vitality to water the existing enthusiasm in the faithful. Krishna notices in the very opening of this chapter a glow in Arjuna's face which declares amply that he is delighted in gaining this new vision of Hinduism which he thought that he thoroughly knew before. The teacher in Krishna confesses that he himself feels encouraged by Arjuna's happiness, and, therefore, this chapter is added.

In this chapter Arjuna enquires of Krishna how one can constantly keep in touch with the Eternal aspect of the

Truth, even while one is perceiving the pluralistic world and transacting with its objects*. As an answer to this particular question the rest of the chapter is packed with indications of the Joyous Infinite among the Joy-less finite objects.

However, the chapter concludes with a cry of despair on the part of Krishna, which drives home to Arjuna the impossibility of a teacher ever exhausting the analysis of all the things and beings in the world indicating in each the glorious spirit as separate and yet not separate from matter. No Electrical Engineer can ever hope to exhaust all the bulbs and fans and such other equipments in the world, taken one by one to indicate to a student of Electrical Engineering what exactly constitutes in each, the equipment as separate from the electrical current. The chapter concludes, "*Of what avail to you to know all these diversities? I exist supporting the entire by a portion of Myself*".

In Vedanta the Self seemingly conditioned by or reflected in or functioning through the *individual* mind-and-intellect is the Ego (*Jiva*)—limited and thwarted by its own imperfections. While, the same Eternal Self conditioned by, reflected in or functioning through the *total* mind-and-intellect is the God-Principle (*Iswara*) unlimited and ever a Master of Its own Perfections. This idea, of the Self as seen through an individual mind and the cosmic mind, if once understood properly both the Chapters X and XI become amply self-evident and stand self-explained.

In the tradition of democracy the concept of a Government or the idea of a nation should give us a healthy analogy with which we can vaguely feel our way to a certain amount of comprehension of the entire suggestiveness in this ancient Vedantic concept of the God-principle. In democracy with

* Ibid., 17

adult franchise, every grown up member of the society has his vote to express his will, and he alone can come up to govern the country who represents in himself the will of the majority. Such an individual may be considered as one who identifies himself with the will of the largest number of the people in that nation, during that period of its history. One who has been thus elected to govern will have to rule the nation according to the demands of the people. The Government is thus created out of the powers and rights surrendered to a central pool by each individual, yet, once having formed, it is very well known, how the Governors become mightier than the individuals among the governed.

I, identifying with my limited intellect and mind, become the mortal ego, bound and conditioned on all sides ; while I, the Self, identifying with that Total mind-and-Intellect become the Mighty and Powerful, the Omnipotent and Omniscient God-Principle, constituting in Myself the Creator, the Sustainer and the Annihilator.

It is very well-known and at all hands experienced by all of us that our world ever gets coloured by the condition of our own minds. When we are happy the world to us is a dancing-hall of light and laughter, mirth and happiness, while the same world becomes a miserable dungeon of agony and tear when our mental conditions change. Also it is noticeable that in each one of us our world—of success and joy or of misery and sorrow—becomes completely and totally extinct whenever we are in the state of deep-sleep—meaning, whenever in each one of us our mind-intellect-equipment does not function. Classifying all these observations it can be enunciated that “as the mind so the world, and where there is no mind, there, there is no world for that individual”.

Thus: I create my world with my mind, you create your world with your mind and he creates his world with his mind, then into the pool of my world certain aspects and portions of the world of others come to overlap, for varying periods of time. Philosophically viewed, therefore, the total world of forms and beings is created, sustained and destroyed by the number of minds totally available to cognise and experience in this whole Universe. This total-mind includes in itself, even the rudimentary perceptions of a mind in the plant kingdom and the relatively better developed mind and intellect of the animal kingdom—including the worms in my intestines—and also the well-developed mind of man. The theory of the God-Principle as propounded by the Vedanta when thus understood completely, it comes to appeal to the faculty of reasoning in all intelligent creatures.

The implications of this theory are vast. It not only proves and explains the omniscieny and the omnipotency of God, but also it provides us with a comprehensible import to the term generally employed in describing the Supreme as “The Lord of the Universe—*Sarvalokamaheswara*”.

While listening to this Discourse, Arjuna seems to have got himself lost in an experience of something transcendental, if not of the Eternal. This preparation, given to Arjuna, is a necessary mental elevation in cosmic self-expansion, without which the special power of cognition to experience the concept of the Cosmic Man as described in the following chapters would have been impossible.

॥ अथ दशमोऽध्यायः ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।

यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ १ ॥

SRI BHAGAVAN UVACA

1. *bhuya eva mahabaho
srnu me paramam vacah
yat te ham priyamanaya
vaksyami hitakamyaya*

भूयः - Again, एव - verily, महाबाहो - mighty-armed, शृणु - hear, मे - my, परमम् - supreme, वचः - word, यत् - which, ते - to you, प्रीयमाणाय - who are delighted, अहम् - I, वक्ष्यामि - will declare, हितकाम्यया - wishing (your) welfare.

The Blessed Lord Said

1. Again, O mighty-armed, listen to My Supreme word ; which I, wishing your welfare, will declare to you who are delighted to hear me.

As Arjuna was listening to the extremely optimistic philosophy of this Eternal Master of Smile, the confused man-of-action in the Pandava-soldier felt irresistibly charmed.

From the trembling pale man of indecision whom we met in the first chapter of the Geeta there has been in Arjuna almost an incomparable development in his inward equipoise. This inward peace that comes from an intelligent study of the Hindu philosophy is vividly brought out in the opening stanza of this chapter when Lord Krishna himself describes his disciple Arjuna, as one “*who is delighted*” with what he has heard so far

No teacher can feel sufficiently inspired to continue his discourses unless his students nourish his enthusiasm with their interested ‘listening’. As one understands more and more the implications of the philosophy of Vedanta one cannot but come to feel an inward glow of peace and satisfaction. The peace felt within will, of necessity, gleam out to throw a perceptible aura of brilliant joy on the face of the student. Noticing this kindling satisfaction and blazing joy in Arjuna’s face the Lord of the Geeta gets encouraged to expound his philosophy more exhaustively with revived appetite. “*Again, hear My supreme word, which I will declare, because I desire your welfare*”.

Here Arjuna is addressed as “*Mighty-armed*” which is a reminder for the Pandava that he is a hero in life and that he should be equally a hero in his inner life to carve for himself, out of his present, a greater kingdom of diviner joys, which is his by heritage ! And it is evident that the Lord’s discourse is not upon any secular subject, but it is upon the greater possibilities in man and how one can rediscover these in oneself; for, it is said that Arjuna should listen “*to My supreme word, which I, wishing your (spiritual) welfare*” (*Hitam*) will now declare.

Why has the Lord decided to continue his discourses again, is now explained :

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।

अहमादिहि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥ २ ॥

2. *na me viduh suraganah
prabhavam na maharsayah
aham adir hi devanam
maharsinam ca sarvasah*

न - Not, मे - my, विदुः - know, सुरगणाः - the hosts of Devas, प्रभवम् - origin, न - not, महर्षयः - the great Rishis, अहम् - I, आदि - the beginning, हि - for, देवानाम् - of the Devas, महर्षीणाम् - of the great Rishis, च - and, सर्वशः - in every way.

2. Neither the Hosts of the Heavens, nor the great Rishis know My origin ; for, in every way I am the source of all the *Devas* and the *Rishis*.

Whenever we cannot gather a knowledge from direct experience, our next best source of information is from those who are supposed to know about the subject-matter. Even this indirect method of self-education is not available in *Brahma-Vidya*, because as the Lord says “*neither the Hosts of Heaven nor the great seers know my origin*”

Later on * in the same chapter we will have occasion to understand what actually the Lord means by the term the “great seers”. It is not exactly the Men of Wisdom, explained in our mythology,† as the Seven great Rishis starting with Brigu and ending with Vasista. According to

* Sloka 6.

† Sapta Rishis.

the *Puranas* these seers, a group of seven, are different from text to text and we find three different sets of names being mentioned in different places. They are :—

Brigu	Marichi	Kashyap
Nabha	Angiras	Atri
Vivaswan	Atri	Bharadwaja
Sudhama	Pulasthya	Viswamitra
Virja	Pulaha	Gowtama
Atinama	Kritu	Jamadagni
Sahishnu	<i>Vasishta</i>	<i>Vasishta</i>

Thus, we find that these Rishis counted from Brigu to Vasishta are seven in number, though differently named in different places. These Rishis are not to be considered as men of Knowledge and experience, but they are, in the style of the *Puranas* objectified representations of the subjective facts in the science of Vedanta. According to the Sankhyan philosophy the Infinite has become the finite through the intervention of the total Intellect, termed by them in their text-books as the '*Mahath Tattwa*'. It is equivalent to our concept of the God Principle (*Parameswara*) *.

When the Infinite comes to be seemingly identified with the Total-intellect or Cosmic-intellect † (*Mahat*) and develop thereby an ego-centric personality of Its own (*Ahankar*) It projects Itself out, for Its own joy-transactions, a world of sense-objects. These sense-objects are called the five *tan-matras* ‡. And thus, the '*Mahath*,' the '*Ahankar*' and the

* Refer introduction to this chapter.

† "Samashti Buddhi Abhimani Paramatman" is Iswara.

‡ The rudiments that constitute among themselves the five Great Elements. They are nothing but the qualities that predominate in each of the five elements. In Ether the sound, in Air the touch, in fire the form, in water the taste, and in Earth the smell. Thus the *tan-matras* are the very sense-objects themselves. Refer Swamiji's Talks on Vivekachudamani.

five ' *tanmatras* ' together constitute the Seven Rishis objectified in the *Puranas* under different names. In short, these Seven Rishis together represent the intellectual and the mental life of man, the efficient and the material Causes for all creations.

Devas do not literally mean the Hosts of the Heavens ; the word *Deva* rises from its root, meaning ' to illumine '. The *Devas*, therefore, are sense-organs which illumine for us the world-of-objects for our innumerable experiences.

Now it becomes clear that the Self, the Pure Consciousness, is " *the source of all the Devas and the Great Rishis,*" meaning the Conscious Principle is the substratum for both the physical and the mind-intellect-life in each one of us. Even though they are thus sustaining themselves in Truth, they, cannot ' *know My origin* '.

It is usual that an instrument of cognition cannot of itself cognise its objects but needs an intelligent observer to make use of that instrument. The instrument can never illumine the observer but can only bring its world-of-objects within the perception of the observer.

In short, the Consciousness being the very subjective Truth in us, it can never become an object-of-perception for the sense-organs, or an object-of-feeling for the mind, or an object-of-knowing for the intellect. This sacred truth discussed at length in the Upanishads, * is being beautifully condensed and hinted at by the Lord here in the stanza.

In fact, the chapter now under review and the following one are both an intelligent restatement of the subtle Upanishad philosophy in a more homely language, delivered by not an utterly detached man of Rishi-perfections, but a homely,

* Read Swamiji's Discourses on Kenopanishad.

beloved, friend of man, the songful Lord of Brindavan. To all those who are soaked with the literature discussing the immortal culture, the Upanishads, these passages convey the exquisite fragrance from the garden of the Vedas.

May be then nobody can come to know and realise the Self which is the origin of our physical, mental and intellectual life. To deny this fear it is said :

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।

असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

3. you mam ajam anadin ca
vetti lokamahesvaram
asammudhah sa martyesu
sarvapapaih pramucyate

यः - Who, माम् - me, अजम् - unborn, अनादिम् - beginningless, च - and, वेत्ति - knows, लोकमहेश्वरम् - the great Lord of the worlds, असंमूढः - undeluded, सः - he, मर्त्येषु - amongst mortals, सर्वपापैः - from all sins, प्रमुच्यते - is liberated.

3 He who knows Me as unborn and beginningless, as the great Lord of the worlds, he, among the mortals is undeluded, and is liberated from all sins.

“He who knows me”. Not merely knowing in an emotional sweep or even in an intellectual comprehension, but by a true spiritual apprehension, which comes to one during moments of one's own intimate identifications with the Self. The Self is to be realised as “unborn, beginning-

less, the great Lord of the world". These three terms, each pregnant with suggestions to those who know a little of the ancient traditions in the Hindu philosophical thoughts, are generally dumb to the uninitiated. The realm of matter is the realm of finitude, where for each item of being or thing or experience we find a beginning and an end, a birth and a death

The Infinite cannot be ever born, inasmuch as It never has come to express itself into any finite manifestation. The ghost is born and therefore, must it also die: but the post cannot be considered either as having given birth to the ghost, or that the post has come to be born out of the ghost. The post was, is and shall ever be. The Self is the Eternal and, therefore, It is birthless: everything else comes to be born in the Self, exists in the Self and when all things are destroyed they come back to end in the Self. The waves are born but the ocean is birthless. Every wave, every manifestation, has a beginning, an existence and an end. But the essence cannot have a beginning and, therefore, in this stanza here, the Self is qualified as 'beginningless'.

The Lord of the worlds: "*Sarva-loka-maheswarah*"—The term '*loka*' is one of the Sanskrit words which has a vast range of implications which are ignored generally by the translators when they render it as the 'world'. In the mother-language '*loka*' comes from a root meaning 'to experience', and therefore, the word should, in its full import, come to represent a meaning as 'a field for experiencing'. In this sense we also make use of the word '*loka*' even in the ordinary usage: 'the world of the rich', 'the world of the under-dog', 'the world of the poets' etc. In this ampler meaning the universe indicated by the word '*loka*' is not only the physical world experienced by our physical equipments but it includes also the world of feelings and the world

of ideas recognised, reacted with, and experienced by each one of us in our lives.

Thus, my 'loka' is the field of experiences that I revel in at the levels of my body, my mind and my intellect,—and it is evident that none of these experiences can ever be mine unless I am constantly aware of all of them. This Essential Factor, pure Awareness or Consciousness, without which I am dead to the world, with which I perceive the world and live it actively, should necessarily be then the Presiding Chieftain, that rules with its Grace my 'loka'.

The Atman that rules over my world is the Atman that rules over the worlds of each individual, the Self being the same. The entire universe is a sum-total of the worlds of experience of each, and evidently the ruler that governs the entire must necessarily be the Absolute Self itself. The term 'the Lord of worlds' is to be thus rightly understood. The Lord is not a tyrant over life, a Sultan that autocratically rules over our experiences. Self is the Lord of our experiences, just in the same fashion as the sun is the lord of my day time world.

"He who knows me as birthless, beginningless and as the great Lord of the worlds", he ends his delusion. In and through the grinning ghost that frightens me, when I gain a glimpse of the wayside post, I have gone beyond my delusion and is released from every sin—in Hinduism the concept of sin is not the frozen picture of a horrid inevitability, which the Christian is never tired of preaching. Man is not punished *for* his sins but he is punished *by* his sins. Sin, is a self-insulting act arising out of a misunderstanding in the sinner as to his own identity.

When one wanders away from one's own Real Nature as the Self, to identify with the outskirts of one's own

peripheral extent, and behaves as though one is nothing but a mass of oozing flesh or a bundle of throbbing emotions, or a pack of ideas, one, in order to fulfil oneself comes to act in a way dishonouring one's own Godly dignity and divine status, the one-without-a-Second. Such acts and thoughts chain him down to pant for low pleasures, never allowing him to rise above into the higher climbs of his fuller perfections.

On re-discovering the nature of the Self, and gaining thereby a perfect irremovable and complete identification of himself with the Self, he can, no longer, come to live in or perpetuate any more his past 'sins'. The 'sins' in us are the carbuncles from which we come to suffer the pains of our limitations and the sorrows of our bondage. The moment we understand and live in our realisation that the Self is unborn and beginningless and that in the Self there is none of the decaying and the perishable matter, we have gained all that has to be gained, and we have known all that has to be known. Such an individual of true realisation, himself becomes the Lord of the worlds.

How is the Self the Lord of the Worlds?

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।

सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥ ४ ॥

4. *buddhir jnanam asammohah
ksama satyam damah samah
sukham duhkham bhavo bhavo
bhayam ca abhayam eve ca*

बुद्धिः – Intellect, ज्ञानम् – wisdom, असंमोहः – non-illusion, क्षमा – forgiveness, सत्यम् – truth,

दमः - self-restraint, शमः - clamness, सुखम् - happiness, दुःखम् - pain, भवः - birth or existence, अभावः - non-existence, भयम् - fear, च - and, अभयम् - fearlessness, एव - even, च - and.

4. Intellect, wisdom, non-illusion, forgiveness, truth, self-restraint, calmness, happiness, pain, birth or death, fear and also fearlessness ;

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।

भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥ ५ ॥

5. *ahimsa samata tustis*
tapo danam yaso yasah
bhavanti bhava bhutanam
matta eva prthagvidhah

अहिंसा - Non-injury, समता - equanimity, तुष्टिः - contentment, तपः - austerity, दानम् - beneficence, यशः - fame, अयशः - ill-fame, भवन्ति - arise, भावाः - qualitieis, भूतानाम् - of beings, मत्तः - from me, एव - alone, पृथग्विधाः - of different kinds.

5 Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, beneficence, fame, infamy (all these) different kinds of “qualities-of-beings” arise from me alone

Continuing the general idea that the Lord is the material cause as well as the efficient cause for the world of plurality within an individual and for the world outside, Krishna is enumerating in these two stanzas the various qualities expressed by the mind-and-intellect of man.

When we talk of creation ordinarily we are apt to consider only the world of physical forms. To indicate the larger comprehensiveness of the term 'creation', and to clearly bring out that it means also the mental and the intellectual lives in all living creatures these qualities are enumerated.

Agian, men and beings are usually classified under these qualities, and thus, it is clearly proved that each individual is irrevocably bound up with his own mental qualities. As the mind, so the man. It is here to be noticed that only the *positive* qualities are enumerated. And, following the traditional style of Sanskrit commentators we can interpret the second conjunction, the indeclinable (*ca*), as denoting the opposite of these qualities also. However, directly the Lord is mentioning only the positive qualities inasmuch as in a man, who has these noble qualities, there is a greater availability of Truth for our perception.

Even though the terms are familiar it is interesting how Sankara makes a clear distinction between *Sama* and *Dama* in the opening line. According to the Acharya the former is the faculty of controlling internally the rise of mental thoughts and desires, which generally propel the sense-organs to run wild in the world of their sense-objects, while, the latter, as a contrast to the former, is a term indicating the strength in us to control the external *Indriyas* running riotous among the sense-objects.

These different types of emotions and thoughts which provide for each individual, different values of life and whip forward each to act and live the external world accordingly—are all rising from "*Me alone*". Whether the ghost be pleasantly smiling or angrily grinning or vengefully threatening, its smiles, grinnings and threatenings are all qualities

that have no other substratum than the post. If the Pure Awareness were not there to illumine all our qualities existing in our own bosom, they have no existence, atleast as for as we ourselves are concerned.

These qualities almost indicate a complete classification of the entire world of beings and their fields of experiences, and therefore, as Sankara does, we can consider that these two stanzas are but an exhaustive commentary upon (*Sarvalokamaheswara*) the Lord's status as the Lord of the Worlds.

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।

मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥ ६ ॥

6. *maharsayah sapta purve*
catvaro manavas tatha
madbhava manasa jata
yesam loka imah prajah

महर्षयः - The great Rishis, **सप्त** - seven, **पूर्वे** - ancient, **चत्वार** - four, **मनवः** - manus, **तथा** - also, **मद्भावाः** - possessed of powers like Me, **मानसाः** - from mind, **जाताः** - born, **येषाम्** - from whom, **लोके** - in world, **इमाः** - these, **प्रजाः** - creatures.

6. The Seven Great Rishis, the Ancient four and also Manus, possessed of powers like Me were born of (My) mind ; from them are these creatures in the world, (originated and sustained).

The idea slightly hinted at in the second stanza is being taken up here to prove how the Seven Seers, the four Kumaras and the Fourteen manus, all born out of the Lord's own Mind, together constitute the material and the

efficient causes for the entire world, as “*from them are these creatures in the world*” born.

The Seven Rishis:—The objectified representation of the *Puranas* as the Seven Seers when rightly understood “subjectively” becomes nothing but our intellect, ego and the five sense-stimuli, which together constitute the world experienced by each one of us. These items in the microcosm are expanded to the macorcosmic fullness as the Total Intellect (*Mahat*), the Ego (*Ahankar*) and the Rudimentary qualities in the five great elements, called the elemental qualities, (*tanmatras*) which are nothing other than the sense-objects: the sound, the touch, the form, the taste and the smell.

Subjectively analysed it becomes very easy for us to perceive the implication of this allegory provided by the Seven-Rishi-picture. In the Self, since It is All-full, there must necessarily be potential thought-disturbances. In us we know that when thoughts rise they in their individual manifestations are incapable of disturbing us. At some moments some one desire in us gets captured, and identifying with it, we maintain it with a steady stream of dynamic thoughts. Thus dynamised, the initial thought becomes mighty and powerful to destroy our peace and tranquility, and projecting itself out creates the perceptions of and our reactions to the world of the five sense-objects. The thought-stream and its projections together supply us with both the material and the efficient causes for our own tiny world of joys and sorrows, successes and failures, yearnings and fulfilments.

“*The Four Ancients and the Manus*”—Sri Sankaracharya in his commentary reads the stanza as “*the Ancients, and the four Manus*” and explains that the four *Savarna* Manus, out of the total fourteen, are indicated here. These Manus

gave us the Laws of behaviour, private and public for the individual as a decent person, as a member of the family, of the community, of the nation and of the world. But there are commentators the majority of whom consider it as “*the four great Ancient and the Manus*”. This seems to be more acceptable in the context of a subjective analysis, and this is recommended and ably supported by the next line wherein Lord says that all of them are children of “*My mind*”.

Brahmaji, the Creator, at the very beginning of his creation, it is described in the Puranas, produced out of his own mind four eternal boys (Kumaras); Sanatkumara, Sanaka, Sanatana and Sanandana. The creator in ourselves is but the life in us functioning through an ‘urge-to-create’ in any field. Whenever the creative urge expresses itself, immediately the factors constituting the subtle-body (*Antahkarana*) come to express themselves and function in full vigour. The creator of the whole Universe when he thus comes under the ‘urge-to-express’ himself, he has to maintain a consistent *Sankalpa*, which immediately produces a channel of “constant thoughts”, creating the stuff for the ‘inner-instruments’. This ‘bundle of thoughts’ flowing consistently, functions as the mind, intellect, ego and *chit*. These four factors expressing in themselves the total inner-instrument, are represented here as the Eternal Boys of Wisdom, born out of the mind of the Creator, at the very beginning of his creative activity.

Thus, in one and the same stanza the macrocosmic (*Samashti*) and the microcosmic (*Vyashti*) causes for creation have been indicated. Macrocosmically (*Samashti*) the Total-intellect (*Mahat*), Ego (*Ahankar*) and the five Rudimentary sense-objects (*tanmatras*) supply the causes for the projection of the world and its sustenance, while

microcosmically (*Vyashti*) the ‘creative-urge’ in us gets itself fulfilled through the intervention and play of our inner-equipments constituted of the intellect, mind, ego and *chit*.

The Seven Seers and the Four Ancients thus together indicate both the efficient and the material causes for the macrocosmic and microcosmic world created.

Those, who are fed upon the superficial meaning of this stanza, and hence familiar only with the word-meanings of this portion, may feel rather uncomfortable at our interpretation, since the usual method is more easily grasped. That “the rainbow is Indra’s weapon” is perhaps an easy and attractive poetry, but it is not scientifically true, nor is it satisfactory to the intelligent. Mysticism used in this stanza, if ignored, it becomes inadequate to justify the fourth concluding section of the stanza, where the Lord says “*of them this world of creatures*” is maintained.

Why should one understand these implications of creation from the standpoint of the individual and the cosmic minds? Listen :

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ ७ ॥

7. *etam vibhutim yogam ca
mama yo veti tattvatah
so vikampena yogena
yujyate na tra samsaayah*

एताम् - These, विभूतिम् - manifold manifestations of my being, योगम् - Yoga power, च - and, मम - mine, यः - who, वेत्ति - knows, तत्त्वतः - in truth, सः - he, अविकम्पेन - unshakable, योगेन -

in Yoga, युज्यते - becomes established, न - not, अत्र - here, संशयः - doubt.

7. He who in truth knows these manifold manifestations of My being (Macrocosm) and (this) Yoga-power of Mine (Microcosm) becomes established in the tremor-less-yoga ; there is no doubt about it.

“*He who in reality knows these two, My Vibhuti and Yoga,*” he reaches to get established in the realisation of the Supreme. In this stanza invariably we find the terms *Vibhuti* and *Yoga* translated as “Manifold manifestations of Beings” (*Vibhuti*), and “My power” (*Yoga*).

In effect although these translations are true, they as such are not efficient enough in conveying the subtle and the brilliant connection between this statement and what had been indicated in the previous stanza. Macrocosmic projection of a created Universe through the intervention of the “Seven Seers” is the Absolute’s own *Vibhuti*, while the microcosmic experience of a limited world through the intervention of the mind-born “Four Ancient Kumaras” is the Divine Yoga of the Self in each one of us. Since the Self, presiding over the destinies of the individual, is Itself the Absolute that forms the substratum for the entire Universe, he who realises both the *Vibhuti* and the *Yoga* as divine expressions of the Eternal, he realises the Infinite.

This understanding of the macrocosm and their incidence upon the Play of life in the field of plurality should not be merely a professor’s book-knowledge, is indicated here when Krishna insists that the seeker must know it “in Reality” (*Tatwathah*). This means that the above-mentioned knowledge is to be realised in a subjective experience and intuitively lived, as “I am the Self, and when I play through the

'Seven Seers' I paint the Universe, and when I play through the 'Four Ancients' I live the tearful life of an individual". It is not then very difficult for us to feel the appropriateness of the statement in the last stanza that the Rishies, Ancients and the Manus, all "were born of mind". When the Self therefore, detaches Itself from the individual mind and the cosmic mind It comes to revel in all Its Absolute glory. Identifying Itself with the cosmic mind It becomes the Creator (*Iswara*) creating the Universe; identifying with the individual's inner-equipments It becomes the limited ego (*Jiva*) suffering the limited world.

To know this implication and to live up to this is the "*tremorless Yoga*"—wherein a permanent and steady establishment in the experience of the Self is assured. As at many points earlier, Vyasa is making his Divine mouth-piece use the sacred word *Yoga* in familiar and daringly novel contexts so that the awe and dread, which had come to be gathered round this blessed term, may be scraped out. The *tremorless Yoga* is as novel as the various definitions of Yoga given earlier in different stanzas* of Geeta, the irreplaceable Bible of Revolt, in all Hindu Renaissance Movements.

The optimistic philosopher in Krishna when he preaches a way-of-life and points out a goal to the utterly efficient man-of-action in Arjuna, there is no occasion for poetic exaggeration or sentimental tom-foolery. Answering the questioning looks of his disciple, Krishna reassures Arjuna, and through him the entire crowd of the eternal students of Geeta, that "there is no doubt about it".

* (i) Samathwam Yoga Uchyate—Ch. II 50.

(ii) Yoga Karmasu Kausalam—Ch. II. 48.

(iii) Dukha-samyoga-viyogam yoga samgnitham—Ch. VI. 23.

Please Read Discourses upon all the above three stanzas.

What exactly is the technique by which we can get ourselves established steadily and permanently in the unbroken experience of the Infinite as our own Real Nature? Listen ;

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।

इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥ ८ ॥

8. *aham sarvasya prabhavo
mattah sarvam pravartate
iti matva bhajante mam
budha bhavasamanvitah*

अहम् – I, सर्वस्य – of all, प्रभवः – the source,
मत्तः – from me, सर्वम् – everything, प्रवर्तते –
evolves, इति – thus, मत्वा – understanding,
भजन्ते – worship, माम् – Me, बुधाः – the wise,
भावसमन्विताः – endowed with meditation.

8. I am the source of all ; from Me everything evolves ;
understanding thus, the wise, endowed with
'loving Consciousness,' worship Me.

The difference between the microcosm and the macrocosm is the difference in the equipments through which the same Truth, the Eternal and the All-perfect, expresses. When life surges through the Cosmic Mind, It (Iswara) comes to project out the entire Universe of plurality ; and when the same Infinite expresses through an individual mind, it (Jiva) projects out the individual world. In both these manifestations—the God principle (Iswara) and the individual ego (Jiva)—the Essence is one and the same, just as for the manifestation of light in the bulb and heat in the heater the energy is one and the same electricity. In electricity, considered as pure energy, there is neither light nor heat. In the same way in the Pure Self, in its essential Nature, there is

neither the God nor the ego. He who realises this “*in Reality*”, we were told, will become established in the Supreme Awareness through the “*Tremorless Yoga*”*

The assertion made in the previous verse is again, for a second time, confirmed in the stanza under review. From a sample of mud, after kneading it properly with water we prepare a ball of mud of the required plasticity. The ball of mud is next put on the pot-maker’s wheel and roughly shaped out. In the third stage these are finished, dried and polished. And in its fourth state the pots so made are baked and painted. In this case, the mud can insist, certainly, that it is the origin and essence of the pot, and that it is only in mud, and never divorced from mud, that the four stages of the pot’s evolution had taken place. This is true with all mud pots at all times; none of them has any existence, growth or development without the mud, which is the sustaining material in all of them.

The Self being the Essence, the Eternal Ground, the Substratum for all the changes in the multiple world it is said, “*I am the origin of all and from Me everything evolves*”. When an intellect is soaked with this understanding that the sources for both the microcosmic world and the macrocosmic Universe are in essence but the one Truth, the Self, that wise man is capable of invoking that Truth in him. “*He worships Me with loving consciousness*”. The crucial word in this stanza (*Bhavasamanvitah*), which accomplishes the actual invocation of the Truth, has been interpreted in different ways by different translators. And that exactly is the glory of the Sanskrit. We must say that all of them are right, when read together, but none of them is completely true in itself.

* More familiarly known in our scriptures as the ‘Samadhi Yoga.’

This crucial term has been translated and commented upon by Sankaracharya as “ Full of perseverance (*abhinivesa*) in seeking the Supreme Reality ”; others as: “ who share my nature ”; and, yet others, as merely “ full of love ”. As we said, they all are right, when rightly understood in their total import. “ *Bhajan* ” is the invocation of the diviner aspect of our character, which is already in us but now lying unmanifested, behind the veil of misconceptions that froth up from our own spiritual ignorance. This invocation can be effective only when the intellect is fully convinced of both the macrocosmic glory of the Self (*Vibhuthi*) and the microcosmic expression of the same (*Yoga*).

An individual whose intellect is thus soaked with this discriminative awareness—of the subtle difference between the cosmic and the individual—he alone is capable of turning his mind away from the created world-of-objects towards the one and the same Subjective Reality both in the Creator and in himself . The attitude of a mind, while successfully employing itself in this inward quest, is being indicated here by the pregnant term ” with loving consciousness (*Bhava-samanvitah*).

Love or devotion is measured by the capacity of the lover to identify himself with the beloved. In short, love is fulfilled when the identification is complete, * and when the devotee is capable of experiencing in himself that he is none other than the Infinite Self, which, functioning through the Cosmic-mind, plays the part of the Iswara, the Creator, and, which, when functioning through an individual mind-intellect-equipment, behaves as though It is the Jiva, the limited ego.

* Read Swamiji's Talks on Vivekachudamani—slokas 31 and 32, pages 77-82.

What has been asserted courageously in the previous stanza has been here systematically brought within the embrace of a technique by which the above mentioned experience can be brought within the intimate personal comprehension of every student.

मच्चित्ता मदतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।

कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥ ९ ॥

9. *maccitta madagataprana*
bodhayantah parasparam
kathayantas ca mam nityam
tusyanti ca ramanti ca

मच्चित्ताः - With their minds wholly in Me,
मदतप्राणाः - with their life absorbed in Me,
बोधयन्तः - enlightening, परस्परम् - mutually,
कथयन्त - speaking of, च - and, माम् - Me,
नित्यम् - always, तुष्यन्ति - are satisfied, च - and,
रमन्ति - (they) are delighted, च - and.

9. With their minds wholly resting in Me, with their senses absorbed in Me, enlightening each other, and ever speaking of Me, they are satisfied and delighted.

The practical man-of-action, Arjuna, has been painted throughout the Geeta as a person suffering from an acute appetite always to live what he knows. To him any philosophical idea, that cannot be put into practise in his own work-a-day world, is mere poetry, meant for harem-girls to read and higggle about. The teacher of Arjuna is also represented in the Geeta as poignantly conscious of this intense trait in his student. By an understanding of the

macrocosmic and the microcosmic projections, through “devoted consciousness”, even if a wise man is capable of actually coming in contact with and experiencing the Infinite as his own Real Nautre, Arjuna for one, perhaps, will have no objection to it, but the Pandava Prince will not himself try to reach such a fantastic goal unless he realises that experience would make him a better man in life, add to his hunger to live, and definitely increase his share of joy-fulfilments.

If our religious perfections would make our life a liability to ourselves, no living creature would enter religion with any gusto. To show that the religion of the Geeta ushers mankind to a wider field of experienceable perfections, which can be made available even while we are sweating and toiling at our allotted posts of duty, this enlivening verse is declared by the Lord.

“With a mind wholly turned to Me” (*Matchittah*) : With a mind completely integrated into a steady single-pointedness alone can the seekar meditate efficiently upon the Supreme. Single-pointedness is lost if the mind is entertaining more than one idea. To remember electricity in all the bulbs, fans and heaters is not a question of any deliberate effort, but it is the very nature of our knowledge about it. To remember that all mud-pots are made up of mud, we need not strain ourselves : it is a voluntary repetition of an automatic act. Similarly, once our intellects are soaked with a convincing realisation, that the Essence behind the God-principle (*Isvara*) and the individual ego (*Jiva*) is one and the same, whatever feelings may arise in the mind, or whatever thoughts may arise in our intellect, it is not very difficult for the Truth-Seeker to remember constantly of the Conscious Principle behind them all, and this constant

awareness of the Self is indicated here by the term 'Matchittah'.

“With their senses absorbed in Me” (*Mat-gata-pranah*): The term *Prana* is not to be translated merely as the Vital air but they are the five different manifestations of life* available for our recognition in any living body. Here however, the term *Pranah* is used mainly to indicate the five sense-organs. These organs of perception are the only peep-windows through which our mind wanders out and the world-of-objects enters the mind in its return visits. Vedanta never asks the seeker to retire and run away as fugitives from the field of Sense-objects—which is never possible so long as we are alive. The path of intellectual pursuit is the path of discrimination, through which process we can so regulate and train our thoughts that at the impact of any object of the world the mind immediately gets reminded of the Eternal Consciousness, without which the object would not have been illumined for the mind to experience it.

“*Discussing with one another*”: when students of intellectual affinity in interest come together and discuss mutually their pat subject they, not only crystallise their knowledge, but often come to gain an assuring amount of confident knowledge which till then was only some life-less information-bits gathered from silent books. This technique of mutual discussion has been tirelessly emphasised in Vedanta in its very definition of *Brahmavidya*† where it upholds this technique as one of its most important limbs.

* Five in number each presiding over a definite function within the living body. Read the exhaustive treatment of this conception in Swamiji's Discourses on Prasnopanishad Query III—Brahmanas : 3-7.

† Read foot note to stanza 34, Ch, IX,

A true seeker is one who maintains in himself a constant remembrance of the Conscious Principle in him—whatever be the activities of the mind or of the sense-organs. They maintain this channel of thinking steadily through mutual discussions on and a constant seeking of the *Atman*. Such seekers ultimately come to experience a scintillating joy softening their life's wheels as they roll down along their stony path. In the Upanishads† the same idea has been beautifully put by a smiliar pair of words, 'sports' (*Kreedanti*) and 'revels' (*ramanthi*). Here, however, the former word is replaced by an equally efficient term to indicate the same meaning (*Tushvanti*).

These two terms though they connote almost the same meaning, commentators point out that between them there is a subtle difference. The former (*Kreedā*) is a pleasure that is derived as a result of our contact with something other than ourselves: as in bath, dance, play, etc., while the latter (*Raman*) is also a pleasure but derived within ourselves, by ourselves, without the intervention of any other object or objects other than ourselves: as in dreams, imaginations, plannings, remembrances etc.,

In the context of the stanza it becomes quite evident that these two words stand for our life in the midst of the external world of objects and our subjective inward life when we are all alone by our own thoughts. One who has realised the Truth—through right understanding and when one has invoked It through 'loving consciousness'—and has become all-centred with the constant Awareness, one gains a complete relief from the thraldoms of his external circum-

† Refer Swamiji's Discourses on Mundakopanishad Ch, III, Sec, i-4, Page 100.

stances or his inner mental moods or his intellectual dissatisfactions.

In all experiences whether without or within, the perfect one is constantly aware of the Consciousness that illuminates all the experiences. Alauddin would have enjoyed the vision of Padmini, whether the mirror in which he looked was framed in gold, silver, iron or wood. A perfect one is ever having the vision of the Self, and therefore, the details of the outer patterns or inward moods have nothing to do with him, and they cannot ever veil his vision of the Self anywhere. Naturally, he “sports and revels” at all places in all conditions and at all times. Even a Shylock in life demanding his pound of joy and satisfaction cannot but feel that the spiritual power-hunting can be a proposition which could pay a satisfactory dividend even in the work-a-day world.

The above-mentioned personality-treatment prepares a student for the intuitive flight into the highest realm of active experience in the passive Truth Absolute, now unamanifest. But even while walking the path to perfection Lord Krishna asserts that the seekers on the path of discrimination will come to experience and live a sense of “*contentment and delight*”. These two provide the healthy mental attitude, generating the required inward atmosphere, in which spiritual progress can be guaranteed. The discontented, ever-mourning, seekers, painting in themselves a miserable picture of mental stagnation and intellectual destitution, are not the blessed ones that will ever gain an easy entry into the portals of the joyless joy and the silent laughter—which is the Eternal Goal to be realised.

Having reached this stage of progress in their march from where do the seekers gain their guidance and strength to fulfil their pilgrimage?

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।

ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ १० ॥

10. *tesam satatayuktanam
bhajatam priti-purvakam
dadami buddhi-yogam tam
yena mam upayanti te*

तेषाम् - To them, सततयुक्तानाम् - ever steadfast, भजताम् - (of the) worshipping, प्रीतिपूर्वकम् - with love, ददामि - (I) give, बुद्धियोगम् - Yoga of discrimination, तम् - that, येन - by which, माम् - to Me, उपयान्ति - come, ते - they.

10. To them, ever steadfast, worshipping Me with love, I give the yoga "Buddhi" by which they come to me.

Those who have thus become steadfast in their contemplation on the Self at all the levels of their personality, to them will be added on, the necessary strength and capabilities to vault over the last ranges of their ignorance, which will reach them right into the Temple of Truth. When their awareness slip through their sense-organs or when they come to live among the noisy brood of their own emotions and feelings or when they identify with the ever-surgings and stormy disturbances in their own intellects, they are considered as steadfast, who can ever constantly remember the Principle of Truth during all these activities in them.

This withdrawal of one's identifications with the perceived world-of-objects or the world-of-thoughts or the world-of-ideas can be successful only when one has discovered in oneself some other all-consuming thought to

serve as an efficient substitute, yielding for him a satisfactory quota of absorbing happiness. The Bliss-Absolute Self has such a captivating charm to engage the human attention entirely and, therefore, to the extent an individual gets attached with the Truth to that extent alone can that person gain a detachment from the painful embrace of the false. This Vedantic Truth is indicated when Lord Kṛiṣṇa as though in one and the same breath states “*and serving Me with affection, invoking Me with affectionate devotion*”.

We have already indicated that love means identification. To the extent the ego identifies with the Self to that extent is he a devotee of the Truth, and when one becomes steadfast in it, one comes to really invoke (*Bhajan*) the dormant divinity that is now in one's bosom.

To such individuals who are thus steadily contemplating upon the Self, in an atmosphere of love, delight and contentment, identifying themselves with the Infinite, to them the Lord promises, “*I give that ‘Buddhi Yoga’ by which they come unto Me*”.

This term *Buddhi Yoga* already mentioned earlier* has been described as “the right knowledge gained through meditation upon the Infinite Nature of the Self”. In the context of its use here we may say that such a devotee striving diligently will be blessed with “an intellectual contact, or comprehension,” of the Reality. No doubt, we do not mean that the intellect can comprehend the Infinite. We are merely borrowing a familiar phrase from the realm of the finite experiences. Whenever we have comprehended intellectually, so long as that comprehension is not contradicted by any other different comprehension, we are capable

* Ch. II. 39.

of experiencing what we had comprehended beyond all traces of doubt. Similarly, to such seekers in the maturity of their steady and continued contemplation upon the Self, comes the powers of an intuitive awareness of the Reality.

When through the above processes of bringing the mind to quietude, a meditator has succeeded in arresting his mind's agitations (*Vikshepa*) and has consequently lifted the veiling (*Avarana*) is his intellect, he comes to the state of Experience (*Samadhi*), which is the fulfilment of the *Buddhi Yoga*.

By this Buddhi Yoga what exactly does the Lord accomplish in the seeker? Listen :

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।

नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ ११ ॥

11. *tesam eva nukampartham
aham ajnana-jam tamah
nasayamy atma-bhava-stho
jnanadipena bhasvata*

तेषाम् - For them, एव - mere, अनुकम्पार्थम् - out of compassion, अहम् - I, अज्ञानजम् - born of ignorance, तमः - darkness, नाशयामि - (I) destroy, आत्मभावस्थः - dwelling within their heart, ज्ञानदीपेन - by the lamp of knowledge, भास्वता - luminous.

11. Out of mere compassion for them, I, dwelling within their heart, destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the luminous Lamp of Knowledge.

An existing thing in the outside world may sometimes be veiled from our perceptions because we need certain

favourable conditions for its full perception. In order to hear a sound the sound produced must have the necessary frequency and also the sound waves must reach the drum of the ears. Similarly it is not sufficient that an object is in front of the eyes to give us the perception of the object; the object must be bathed in a beam of light, and then alone the eyes can recognise it.

When I am groping for a key that exists on my table in the darkness of the room, if somebody switches on the light, we can say that he, with his kindly act has *brought me to* the key. Herein it is absurd to assume that the light has *created* the key.

Following this analogy, the Self that is already existing in us, now ducking as it were behind conditions not favourable for its cognition, gets Itself unveiled when these unfavourable conditions are lifted. This negative atmosphere in our bosom that screens the Self is indicated here by the term "*the darkness born of ignorance*". Even in the darkness, remember, the Self is abiding; only, that it is not available for our intimate subjective experience. Seekers who have established themselves in the above mentioned "constant awareness of the Supreme", when they come to earn the *Buddhi Yoga*, they become fit for the final experience of their Real identity with the Self.

Earlier we mentioned that the *Buddhi Yoga* amounts to the *Samadhi*-experience, even when there is yet a thin film of ego-centric experience of bliss. In this stanza we have a description of how from the *Savikalpa*, the seeker is transported all unawares, as though by the intervention of a divine grace, into the consummate *Nirvikalpa* experience of the Infinite. In fact, upto the *Savikalpa* alone is the realm of conscious self-effort, and even the *Buddhi Yoga* comes "from above"—meaning, comes not as a result of

any deliberate action, but it is an automatic, 'partial revelation' when the density of the mist between the ego and the Self is thinned out. The final phase experienced when the mist of ignorance is completely lifted is Self-revelation which comes in Its own Light.

A radium-dialled watch is kept on the table in a dark-room. In the enveloping darkness I am searching for the watch. As I remove the various papers and books that have accumulated on the table, suddenly I come to recognise the watch so sincerely sought, by its own light. The self-effulgent Truth, when hidden behind the fumes of ignorance, it may for the time-being, declare Itself as though non-existent. When the enveloping ignorance is removed, Its own Self-effulgence is sufficient to illumine it.

When the "*darkness of ignorance is destroyed by the luminous Lamp of Knowledge*", the Self stands revealed in Its own glory as One-without-a-second, All-pervading and All-full. This act of Self-revelation is undertaken and performed by the Lord, the Self, who ever "*abides in the heart of his very devotees*". This kindly act of revealing the Self is undertaken "in a spirit of compassion"—in fact, towards Itself. When I am tired of walking, I sit on the roadside in my pilgrimage—out of compassion to myself.

This compassion cannot be directly invoked unless the seeker pays the price for it. In day-time when I open the windows of my room the sun-light, "out of compassion", illumines the room for me; and, here we know that the sun-light has neither the freedom to withdraw this compassion so long as the windows are open, nor has it the capacity to show its compassion before the windows are opened. In short, the sun-light is invoked the moment, 'that which obstructs' the sun-light, is removed.

Similarly, when a seeker, through the above mentioned processes, comes to deserve *Buddhi Yoga*, and practises it diligently, he comes to lift from himself all the veils of ignorance, which are nothing other than his own mental agitations caused by the cloudiness of his intellect. The self-effulgent Self is then compelled to reveal Itself in Its own Light. The lightning needs no other light to illumine it when it passes from one mass of cloud to the neighbouring mountain of cloud.

Sankara in his commentary very beautifully gives a series of flowery metaphorical descriptions* to indicate what this "Light of Knowledge" is, which amounts to explaining it as the mental and intellectual poise gained through a consistent pursuit in right spiritual practice.

The instruction portion for the highest vocation in life, viz. self-development and Self-realisation, concludes here, and yet, Arjuna is not satisfied and, therefore, he is raising his doubt here requesting the Lord to help him gain a confirmation through actual experience.

Having heard thus both the Vibhuti and Yoga of the Lord, described so elaborately in the fore-running verses, Arjuna asks :

* The lamp fed by the oil of peace that comes to the heart of devotion—lit by the consistent mental pursuit of one's own Real Nature—placed in an inner equipment full of detachment—a detachment that arises from an intellect treated with the practices in self-control, an intellect devoid of all sensuality—sequestered from the blowing winds of likes and dislikes, loves and hatreds, shedding the light of true perception born out of a daily practice in concentration and meditation, is the Light of Knowledge which the Lord is hinting at here.

अर्जुन उवाच

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।

पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥ १२ ॥

Arjuna Uvaca

12. *param brahma param dhama
pavitram paramam bhavan
purusam sasvatam divyam
adidevam ajam vibhum*

परम् - Supreme, ब्रह्म - Brahman, परम् - supreme, धाम - abode, पवित्रम् - purifier, परमम् - supreme, भवान् - you, पुरुषम् - Purusha, शाश्वतम् - eternal, दिव्यम् - divine, आदिदेवम् - primeval God, अजम् - unborn, विभुम् - Omnipresent.

Arjuna Said

12. You are the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode, the Supreme Purifier, Eternal, Divine Purusha, the God of all gods, Unborn, Omnipresent.

आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिनरिदस्तथा ।

असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ १३ ॥

13. *ahus tvam rsayah sarve
devarsir naradas tatha
asito devalo vyasah
svayam cai va bravisi me*

आहुः - (They) declared, त्वाम् - thee, ऋषयः - the Rishis, सर्वे - all, देवर्षिः - Deva Rishi, नारदः - Narada, तथा - also, असितः - Asita, देवलः - Devala, व्यासः - Vyasa, स्वयम् - Yourself. च - and, एव - even, ब्रवीषि - (you) say, मे - to me.

13. All the Rishis have thus declared You, as also the Deva-Rishi Narada ; so also Asita, Devala and Vyasa ; and now the same You yourself say to me

To no student of Mahabharata can there be a doubt as to the knowledge of the Vedas in Arjuna. As a prince of that age he had had a complete education in the theoretical studies of the Vedic literature. The Pundits who initiated him into the Vedic culture, had often defined the Supreme in some familiar terms which were very well known to all seekers. But these words are generally empty phraseology for the ordinary students until they are specially initiated to reflect and meditate upon the suggestive imports in these specially coined phrases.

A philosophy has the knack of cooling itself down when its ideas are brought within the folds of a published text-book, used mainly for the purposes of decorating the shelves of those who can afford them, and no doubt, sometimes they are handled by the professorial intellects. As time passes on, philosophy becomes merely a historical narration of ideas, lived some thousands of years ago and gets fossilised into museum-specimens, useless to anyone, save some curiosity-mongers among the life's holiday crowd.

At the time of the Mahabharata, Hinduism was passing through such a facet where the silent skeletons of the Vedic-ideas only grinned at and frightened the followers, although

they were to smile to encourage them to face life and live it diligently. Geeta was a book that ushered in the cultural revolt and heralded a new renaissance Hinduism in this country. Here Arjuna is a typical representative of the confused and the confounded members of the then society, over-fed with unintelligent knowledge, vaguely repeated, least understood and rarely appreciated.

Here Lord Krishna, a vital pulsating man-of-perfection, a typical child of perfect Hinduism, is declaring the old values of life and theories of existence through Arjuna to his generation and his followers for ever: an intelligent re-statement of the old dead ideas, revitalised and re-born. In Geeta the dead words of the Vedas spring up into life when they come from the lips of Krishna, each roaring its message of practical living in the world, and together in their total effect throw such a clear light illumining a path of gaining through life a contact with the beyond. These new contents, packed in the old Vedic phraseology, have surprised the Pandava hero, and he is expressing his wonderment in these stanzas.

Arjuna confesses that he had been already taught, through the Vedic passages, that the great seers of old had indicated the Infinite, the Eternal through suggestive phraseologies, such as “*the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode, the Supreme Purifier, the Eternal, the Self-luminous Purusha, the First Deva, the Birthless and the All-pervading.*” But in all those cases he had heard them only as attributes of the Truth. But when he heard in his own immediate presence the same phrases used by Krishna, in the first person singular, the son of Kunti, feels himself lost not knowing how to comprehend that Krishna, his charioteer, is the Source of the Whole Universe! A practical man-of-the-world as Arjuna was, he needed more data, and satisfying

this demand Krishna, we will discover, supplies enough information in this very same chapter. They, instead of satisfying Arjuna, only sharpen his curiosity, and compel him to demand from Krishna an experimental demonstration, which also Krishna gives in the following Chapter.

The ancient seers mentioned here “*Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa*” cannot be very familiar to the students of the Upanishads. Vyasa, perhaps, deliberately quotes these Rishis of the *Puranas*, rather than the seers of the Upanishads, to popularise the *Puranas*, or perhaps, he wanted to refer only that people who have not the authority to assert the Supreme as their own Nature, but can only quote and describe the Supreme as an objective destination to be reached, when certain conditions are fulfilled in themselves.

‘Asita’ is mentioned just once in *Lalita Visthara*; ‘Devala’ is the son of Viswamitra mentioned in the *Vishnu Purana*, and ‘Vyasa’ is that controversial personality—the author of the *Puranas*, the expounder of the *Brahma Sutras* and the first ‘Editor and Publisher’ of the Vedas in four volumes. Stalwart research scholars have been spending their lives in discovering and fixing an identity to the man behind the pseudonym ‘Vyasa.’ It is accepted by a majority of them that he was Krishna Dwaipayana and it is very interesting to read that according to some he was the disciple of Krishna, and according to others he was one of the mighty Gurus of Krishna.

Arjuna acknowledged and recognised these phrases indicating the attributes of the Lord, only as empty and purposeless words, though they had come from accepted great teachers. His actual surprise was clearly expressed in his words “*So also you yourself repeat to me*”. Here the occasion for Arjuna’s staggering confusion was at how Lord

Krishna—a living creature standing in front of him, whom he knew all these years and was even related* to a contemporary mortal—be Himself the Infinite, the Supreme, the Birthless, and the All-pervading?

Arjuna is looking at Krishna with his physical eyes and he sees only Krishna's physical structure. Krishna has been declaring himself out as the pure Self throughout the Geeta, not as a living member of the Society. "Sri Krishna Paramatman" is the teacher in the Geetha and not the son of Vasudeva, or the Lover of the Gopis. Arjuna could not comprehend 'Krishna-the-Spirit', in his preoccupation with 'Krishna-the-friend', 'Krishna-the-Lover', 'Krishna-the-dependable man of intellect and diplomacy'. Hence the Pandava prince's wonderment and confusion.

To bring out clearly the attitude of the seeker in Arjuna when he asks this question, the following is given :

सर्वमेतद्वत्तं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।

न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥ १४ ॥

14 sarvam etad rtam manye
yan mam vadasī kesava
na hi te bhagavan vaktim
vidur deva na danavaḥ

सर्वम् - All, एतत् - this, ऋतम् - true, मन्ये - (I) think, यत् - which, माम् - to me, वदसि - (you) say, केशव - O Keshava, न - not, हि - verily, ते - your, भगवान् - O blessed lord, व्यक्तिम् - manifestation, विदुः - know, देवाः - Gods, न - not, दानवाः - Danavas.

* As his father-in-law was an uncle of Krishna.

14. I believe all this that You say to me as true,
O Keshava ; verily, O Blessed Lord ! neither the
Devas nor the Danavas know Your manifesta-
tion . (identity).

Arjuna here exposes himself and shows how he has got an unfaltering faith in his teacher and he confesses "*I regard all that you say to me as truth*". 'Kesava' is one who removes all sorrows of those who have surrendered to him. Even though he accepts, all that Krishna says, as truth, he cannot comprehend the significance of the Lord's declarations. In short, Arjuna admits here that his heart is satisfied and is over-flowing with faith and belief, but his intellect is starved and is panting.

The thirst-to-know, under which the famished personality of Arjuna groans, is echoed in the second half of the first line, when he admits that "*Neither the Devas nor the Danavas know your personality*". 'Danavas' are the sons of Danu, who frequently challenge the heavens, obstruct sacrifices and lead generally an undivine life. 'Devas' are highly sensitive denizens of the heavens, who are described in the Puranas as persons who have subtler perceptions, stronger emotions and mightier intellectual comprehensions than the mortals.

Subjectively, 'Devas' stand for the nobler and the higher comprehensions in us and the 'Danavas' for the hosts of negative urges in each bosom. The son-of-Kunti is expressing his despair that the *identity* of the Self can be fixed up neither by the subtlest and the noblest of our perceptions nor can we apprehend this Self through our '*Danava*'—like challenges to possess, to acquire, to investigate and to know. Neither the good in us can embrace the Truth, nor can the bad in us challenge and bring up the

Truth as an opposing force right in front of us. There are only two methods of meeting another being or thing: either as a friend or as a foe, either as something that we like, or something that we abhor. In neither way can we come to apprehend the individuality, the total personality, of the Self--It being the subject: both in Its expression as an individual (*Yoga*) and in Its expansion as the cosmic (*Vibhuti*).

If none can know the Truth, why are you asking Krishna to explain? What exactly is the special quality in Him that He can explain what none else can even know?

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ॥

भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १५ ॥

15. *svayam eva tmana tmanam
vettha tvam purusottama
bhutabhavana bhutesa
devadeva jagatpte*

स्वयम् - Yourself, एव - only, आत्मना - by yourself, आत्मानम् - yourself, वेत्थ - (you) know, त्वम् you, पुरुषोत्तम - O Purusha supreme, भूतभावन - O Source of beings, भूतेशः - O lord of beings, देवदेव - O God of Gods, जगत्पते - O Ruler of the world.

15 Verily, You Yourself know Yourself by Yourself, O Purushottma (Supreme *Purusha*), O Source of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of gods, O Ruler of the world.

To indicate how Krishna is capable of explaining the Supreme which is not known by the Denizens of the Heavens

or the hoares of the nether kingdom, this stanza is declared. The Self is, of course, not known as an 'object' through the intervention of our instruments of knowing, nor can It be apprehended as an 'object'—either through the best or the worst in us. But at the same time the Self being awareness, It in Itself is Knowledge—and to *know* Knowledge, no other *knowledge* is needed. Therefore, it is said by Arjuna, "*You yourself know yourself by yourself*"

In the Sankhyan philosophy the Spark-of-life in each individual is called the *Purusha*, in Whose presence the matter-envelopments, together constituting the Prakriti becomes vitalised. Here Krishna is addressed as '*Purushottama*' meaning "the Self of all selves, the One-without-a-second". In Geeta the term *Purushottama* is sometimes used as the "most glorious of men" and sometimes in the purely technical usage as the "Supreme Self".

Of recent times we have a new interpretation clumsily hauled upon the term '*Purushottama*'* according to which it is a state of realisation higher than the Brahmic Consciousness Itself. The theory is still waiting for its confirmation, for, in Hinduism no theory, however appealing to the intellect it may be, is accepted readily until it is proved by a long line of realised men reporting it as their own intimate experience. It is too early to say that the Rishis of the "Upanishads had not experienced the Supreme-most", and that, "having reached the *Purushottama*—stage of realisation, the Perfected One can bring grace down upon earth". The novelty of this theory may appeal to the present age but it will be presumptuous for anyone to accept it in the face

* Aurabindo's theory.

of the Rishi-definition of the *Brahman* as “the highest state of Truth, beyond which there is nothing else”*.

Lord Krishna is now being recognised and glorified by Arjuna as Pure Brahman, in the second line, where he addresses the Lord as “*the Source of beings, the Lord of Beings, the Deva of Devas, and the Ruler of the world*”. The essential stuff in any object is the ruler and maintainer of its qualities. The quality of gold rules over all the qualities of the various ornaments, whatever be their shape, design, polish, etc. More than this is the controlling and the ruling power of the Consciousness in our lives inasmuch as, without Consciousness, we know nothing of anything. An awareness or a knowledge is possible only when the mental and the intellectual disturbances caused by them are illuminated by the Pure Consciousness.

After the above mentioned introductory words, expressing Arjuna's sense of wonder, reverence and devotion, he is now expressing directly his intellectual demand to the Lord.

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।

याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्यतिष्ठसि ॥ १६ ॥

16. *vaktum arhasy asesena*
divya hy atmavibhutayah
yabhir vibhutibhir lokan
imams tvam vyapya tisthasi

वक्तुम् - To tell, अर्हसि - (you) should,
अशेषेण - without reserve, दिव्या - divine, हि - in-
deed, आत्मविभूतयः - your glories, याभिः - by which,

* Sa Paragati, Sa Para Kashta, Na Param Kincit, etc.
(Katha-Ch. I-Sec III-Sl. II)

विभूतिभिः - your glories, लोकान् - worlds, इमान् - these, त्वम् - you, व्याप्य - having pervaded, तिष्ठसि - exist.

16. You should indeed tell, without reserve of your Divine glories, by which, you exist pervading all these worlds.

There is a directness in the words of Arjuna clearly bringing out the rough soldier in him—ever impatient with any opposition that he might meet: be it in his physical outer life, or in his inner mental plane or in his deeper intellectual fields. He wants to know what exactly are the Lord's divine manifestations in the multiple world of plurality. The Prince is convinced that the Lord is the Essence without which the multiple world cannot exist. At the same time when he looks out into the world through his familiar instruments of the intellect, mind, and body, he recognises nothing but ideas, feelings, and objects; and they are anything but divine.

When a building is illumined on a ceremonial occasion, we see many points of light emitting from the innumerable coloured bulbs of varying intensity, but when we are told that all of them are sustained and fed by the same electricity it would be quite natural for the ignorant to demand to show him electricity in each of its manifestations! As the Cosmic man (*Iswara*) the Lord is both Transcendental and Immanent (*Vibhuti*) in all names and forms that constitute the *Samsara*. This can be felt by a heart of faith but cannot be comprehended by a dense, though sharp, intellect. Naturally, he asked of Krishna an exhaustive discourse upon “*your cosmic glory by which, filling all these worlds you exist*”. Arjuna, a man-of-action and supremely practical minded,

wanted to gather sufficient data for his intellect to ponder over, classify and understand It.

Is it merely an intellectual curiosity in Arjuna that made him ask this question?

कथं विद्यामहं योगिस्त्वा सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।

केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥ १७ ॥

17. *katham vidyam aham yogims
tvam sada parisintayan
kesu-kesu ca bhavesu
cintyo si bhagavan maya*

कथम् - How, विद्याम् - shall know, अहम् - I, योगिन् - O Yogin, त्वाम् - you, सदा - always, परिचिन्तयन् - meditating, केषुकेषु - in what and what, च - and, भावेषु - aspects, चिन्त्यः - to be thought of, असि - (you) are, भगवन् - O blessed Lord, मया - by me.

17. How shall I, ever meditating, know You, O Yogin ?
In what aspects or things, O Blessed Lord, are
You to be thought of by me ?

To every student of the Vedas, it was quite clear that the Supreme cannot become an *object* of any intellectual comprehension. Arjuna being a good student in the traditional Vedic studies, himself knew that a mere intellectual curiosity cannot take him far in his spiritual quest. The above question, therefore, cannot be a mere data-mongering craze without any purpose. This has been amply made clear by the direct words in this stanza.

“How am I to meditate so that I may come to know you?
The goal of a seeker is to *know* the Truth in his own personal

experience, in an intimate identification with It. The Geeta was advocating so far not a retirement from life for purposes of quiet meditation in solitary caves on the banks of some river. Krishna's call to man was a call to duty, the call of work, the call of living God-experience in and through life. Geeta, a scripture we should not forget, was declared in the Mahabharata battle-field at a moment when the world of that time was facing the greatest known historical crisis, both secular and sacred.

Arjuna has been completely converted into the Geeta Religion of Right Action. This indicated especially when Arjuna addresses Krishna in this stanza as "O Yogin,"—the greatest *Karma Yogin* that ever freely lived the thickest of life, yet, never let himself down from the Consciousness of the Divine Essence.

Moreover he makes it very clear why he has requested Krishna to explain "without reserve" His Cosmic Stature. Arjuna asks *In what things are you to be thought of by me?* Even while living the life and meeting its problems, if one were to remember constantly the Divine Presence everywhere one must know exactly where to seek for It: among the individual objects of the world, among the combinations of things and in the community of beings.

Explaining again precisely what he wants Krishna to explain, Arjuna admits that, even if the answers be rather lengthy, he will not feel tired of listening to and understanding them all:

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।

भूयः कथयतृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥ १८ ॥

18. *vistarena tmano yogam
vibhutim ca janardana
bhuyah kathaya trptir hi
srnvato na sti me mrtam*

विस्तरेण - In detail, आत्मनः - your, योगम् - Yoga, विभूतिम् - glory, च - and, जनार्दन - O Janardana, भूयः - again, कथय - tell, तृप्तिः - contentment, हि - for, शृण्वतः - (of) hearing, न - not, अस्ति - is, मे - of me, अमृतम् - Nectar.

18. Tell me again in detail, O Janardana, of your Yoga-power and Immanent glory; for I am not satisfied in hearing your (life-giving and so) nectar-like speech.

A Student of philosophy—and for that matter, a true student of any knowledge—should have first of all an insatiable thirst to understand, to know, and to appreciate. Without this appetite, no knowledge can be digested by the students with profit. This is especially so in the subjective science of self-development. For, here, as no where else, the knowledge gained is to be not only digested and assimilated but lived intensively. Therefore, anxiety to listen (*Jigyasa*) has been recognised as one of the noblest qualities, unavoidable for a fit student in Vedanta, if he were to be assured of any progress on the Path of Knowledge.

Vyasa indicates here that Arjuna had this noble trait to a large extent when he makes the Pandava prince confess,

“ *I am never satisfied with listening to the nectarine words* ” of your discourses. *Sat-Sang* has a chastening effect upon all intelligent and interested listeners. This intoxication vicariously experienced by the students, when a true teacher discourses upon the Truth, is no doubt a temporary exhilaration, and it is a passing mood of false peace, which cannot stand in good stead when the student is left all alone to himself.

And yet, however volatile it may be, it can enchant the new initiates, and some, like Arjuna, may become addicts to it. This state of fascination for hearing more and more of the spiritual discourses is amply indicated here. Though this is not the end, this is a good beginning, no doubt and those who are feeling a kick in the study of philosophy are certainly much more nobler than the thousands that cannot even stand anywhere near a philosophical discourse, discussing the Divine !!

The tireless missionary in Krishna, with motherly patience, answers Arjuna .

श्रीभगवानुवाच

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।

प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ १९ ॥

Sri Bhagavan Uvaca

19. *hanta te kathayisyami
divya hy atma vibhutayah
pradhanyatah kurusrestha
na sty anto vistarasya me*

हन्त - Pity ! ते - to you, कथयिष्यामि - (I) will declare, दिव्याः - divine, हि - indeed, आत्मविभूतयः - My glories, प्राधान्यतः - in their prominence, कुरुश्रेष्ठ - best of the Kurus, न - not, अस्ति - is, अन्तः - end, विस्तरस्य - of detail, मे - of Me.

The Blessed Lord Said

19. Pity! Now I will declare to you My divine glories, immanent in their prominence, O best of the Kurus; there is no end to the details of My extent.

This elaborate and exhaustive reply of Krishna, which forms the bulk of this chapter, explains the exact identity of the Self in individual beings and things, and in the combination of things and beings. In the following stanza it must be carefully noted that while he explains his Immanence and Transcendence, (*Vibhuti*), he is very careful to indicate two factors at one and the same time: (1) His Supreme importance in the individual things and (2) the fact that without Him none of the constituent members of an assemblage or of a community, will have any synchronised existence or organised life.

Although Krishna is ready to preach till the conversion is complete, he is slightly feeling despaired at Arjuna's request. In short, as a missionary though he was ready to clear all problems of the faithful, but, unfortunately, he was not a professional preacher *only*. As a Man of Perfection himself, he felt, naturally, an irresistible pity and surprise at the obvious difficulty experienced by Arjuna in realising the Supreme which was so beautifully and clearly described in the preceding verses.

The word “pity” (*Hanta*) with which the whole section opens, expresses the Divine Master’s loving sympathy and anxious consideration at Arjuna’s seeming incapacity to realise in himself *That* which is ever the nearest to him. The usual translation “O Kuruśreṣṭha” (*Hanta Kuruśreṣṭha*) is acceptable only at the sacrifice of a volume of dramatic significance packed in that exclamation.

Even though there is no end to the infinite variety of the Self’s manifestations in plurality—where It projects out either through the Total-mind (*Iswara*) or through the individual mind (*Jiva*)—the All-merciful undertakes the impossible, out of His infinite kindness for the totally self-surrendered disciple, Arjuna. He admits that “*there is no bound to my extent*”, and yet, He undertakes to explain to Arjuna His pervading power Divine, “*only those that are most important*”.

When Mud talks of its own ‘vibhūti’ in the world of mud-pots, addressing a seeker-mud-pot, the Mud-guru will have to say that it is impossible to indicate the *mud-tatva* in all the individual pots. The Lord is the Essence in all names and forms, He being the substratum for the entire world of perceptions, things beings and thoughts. To indicate Him in the world of plurality is not possible, because, He is all-pervading and, therefore, there is no spot where he is not. That is why Krishna here says that he shall indicate for Arjuna such instances and examples where Divinity seems to be more expressive and clear than at other points.

In the physical world also it is true that the sun-light gets itself reflected on all objects equally, be it a dull stone, or a mirror; but it is experienced by us that in the mirror the reflection is more clear and brilliant. Similarly, Lord

promises that he shall indicate through such carefully chosen examples the vital spots and instances at which the Divinity is peeping out the clearest.

“Before we enter into this discussion you better listen to the fundamental truth”, says the Lord, and proceeds:

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥ २० ॥

20. *aham atma gudakesa
sarbabhutasayasthitah
aham adis ca madhyam ca
bhutanam anta eva ca*

अहम् - I, आत्मा - the Self, गुडाकेशः - O Gudakesa, सर्वभूताशयस्थितः - seated in the heart of all beings, अहम् - I, आदिः - beginning, च - and, मध्यम् - the middle, च - and, भूतानाम् - of (all) beings, अन्तः - the end, एव - even, च - and.

20. I am the Self, O Gudakesa, seated in the hearts of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of all beings.

“I am the Self that exists in the heart of all things”—This is a general statement with which the entire discourse of Krishna is opened here. Whenever a real master of research, trained well to be a scientific thinker, starts a discussion upon his pet subject of study and experience it is natural that he will start with a general statement summarising his entire talk. Later on he will work at the warp and woof of his descriptions and logical reasoning

for the elaboration of his theme, and will of necessity come back again to the same statement in the conclusion of his talks. Here also we find in the last stanza of the chapter how Krishna concludes with the same thought, more powerfully expressed, "*I exist supporting this whole world by a portion of myself*".

As we have mentioned earlier Vyasa can be considered as one who is an adept in producing a dramatic effect out of the mere suggestiveness of words—of course, a drama, more for the mind to enjoy, than for the eyes to see. All through the Geeta we find brilliant strokes with which the entire picture of the scene of the war and the unforgettable picture of a mighty man-of-knowledge at the driver's seat on a chariot, philosophically refilling a 'flattened' mortal to brace up and face again the road to success.

Vyasa, a great poet-philosopher as he was, uses always words that are most apt and appropriate to the occasion. Here Arjuna is addressed as "Sleepless Harasser" (*Gudakesa*). This Pandava hero in order to take vengeance upon the greedy Kauravas spent days and nights to master the art of archery. For this, he at first accomplished the greatest feat of controlling the time-swallowing Angel of Sleep and therefore he was also known as "Gudakesa". By using this word 'Gudakesa' Krishna here says to Arjuna that He is the Self, seated in the hearts of all beings "*inculding your enemies, to annihilate whom you won even the sleep*".

If in the earlier verse it was declared that Krishna, as the Self in all, is the essence in the world of multiplicity, the same idea is expressed in other words here also in the second line of the verse, "*I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of all beings*". The world of things and beings are essentially a projection of the mind; the world outside, is

only the Infinite, interpreted by the finite mind. As such, subjectively, this idea can be understood as referring to the world of thoughts. Every thought rises from the Consciousness, exists in the Consciousness, and when they die away they merge back to leave behind nothing but the Consciousness. Where *Chatanya* is not, there thought is not. Later on also we shall find the same idea repeated * and Krishna seems to be never tired of repeating this great truth.

The following are the methods of meditating upon the Self, while living among the endless varieties of objects and beings, that constitute the world of perception.

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।

मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥ २१ ॥

21. *adityanam aham visnur*
joytisam ravir amsuman
maricir marutam asmi
naksatranham aham sasi

आदित्यानाम् - Among the Adityas, अहम् - I, विष्णुः - Vishnu, ज्योतिषाम् - among lights, रविः - the sun, अंशुमान् - radiant, मरीचिः - Marichi, मरुताम् - of the Maruts (winds), अस्मि - (I) am, नक्षत्राणाम् - among the asterisms, अहम् - I, शशी - the moon.

21. Among the (twelve) *Adityas* I am the Vishnu; among Luminaries, the radiant sun; I am Marichi among the Maruts; among asterisms the moon am I.

* Ibid Stanza 32.

“*Of Adityas I am Vishnu*”—In the Vedic tradition, *Adityas*, described in some places as five and in other places as six, are the children born of *Aditi*. Later on, the traditional belief considered twelve *Adityas*, each representing the various months of the year. In *Vishnu Purana* however, we read that Vishnu is one of these twelve *Adityas* and he is described as the most important among the whole lot.

“*Of the luminaries I am the radiant Sun*”.—It is a sad misconception that has been injected into the children of the Rishis, by both the foreign enemies and the local foes of our Aryan Culture, that the Vedic Masters were crude men, ignorant of science and the nature of the world of phenomena. Except the intellectually blind and deaf, parading themselves as scholarly men of dehydrated knowledge, none with commonsense, who had even casually swept his eyes across the statements in the Vedas, can ever dare to acclaim this colossal lie. But unfortunately we read our own Vedas through the translation of the German Scholars, who had been paid for translating these works by the arch enemies of our culture. Max Muller whom we have learnt to adore is the greatest sinner in this particular conspiracy of indirectly ruining our respect for our own culture*.

Modern physics admits that the sun is the source of all energy. Naturally the phrase stands amply self-explained : The Self is the source of all energies wherever It is seen manifested

“*Of the Winds I am the Marichi*”—In the Vedic verses *Maruts* are the sons of *Rudra* ; and the Rig Veda mentions

* It will not be far when our country shall have an exhaustive text-book of evidences to prove this assertion since research scholars are now at work and the publication is soon expected.

Marichi as the chief among them. In the Vedic lore, the *Maruts* represented the presiding deity of the storms, wind and breeze ; in short air in motion.

“*Of the asterisms I am the moon*”—‘*Nakshatras*’ as used in the Indian astronomy indicate the asterisms strewn on the moon’s path. Conceiving thus exclusively the route of the moon in the Universe, the line may be interpreted as expressing the Lord’s glory, inasmuch as among the asterisms the moon is the controller, the regulator, and the most wondrous in splendour.

But we could as well accept the word ‘*Nakshātra*’ in the common man’s understanding as the endless twinkling little stars that we see studded in the night-sky. There are commentators who go even a step further and consider the term representing all the ‘*lights of the night*’. This also is an acceptable interpretation which can convey to us a wealth of suggestion is to ponder over and meditate upon. The Self is as incomparably more glorious, smoothing and pleasant as the moon is in the entire ‘world-of-lights’ that illumine the nights, from the parlour of a hut to the Parliament-House.

It is to be remembered that in these series of twenty-two stanzas, Lord Krishna is trying to supply the seekers with seventy-five items of thought for helping them in the Path of Knowledge to meditate upon and intensify their integration and sharpen their single-pointedness.

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।

इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥ २२ ॥

वेदानाम् - Among the Vedas, सामवेदः - The Sama Veda, अस्मि - (I) am, देवानाम् - among the Gods, अस्मि - (I) am, वासवः - Vasava,

इन्द्रियाणां - among the senses, मनः mind, च - and,
अस्मि - (I) am, भूतानाम् - among living beings,
अस्मि - (I) am, चेतना - intelligence.

22. *Vedanam samavedo smi*
devanam asmi vasavah
indriyanam manas ca smi
bhutanam asmi cetana

22. Among the Vedas I am the Sama Veda; I am
Vasava among the Gods; among the senses I am
the mind; and I am the intelligence among living
beings.

“*Of all the Vedas I am the Sama-Veda*”—The bulk of
the *Sama-Veda* is nothing but the Essence of the *Rig-Veda*
and the latter is considered as the most important of the
four Vedas. In Chandogya Upanishad, the *Sama-Veda* has
been so beautifully glorified. Again, in *Sama-Veda* there is
the added joy of music, inasmuch as the *Samans* are to be
sung in complicated tunes, the melody and rhythm of which
are revealing evidences of a mighty art that has been so
exquisitely developed by our ancients. Thus, through the
beauty of the comparison we may read that Krishna is (I am)
the Infinite Essence tuned to music as *Rig-Veda*-mantras are
in the *Samans*.

“*Of the Devas I am Vasava*”—Among the denizens of
the heavens *Vasava* is the King, Indra. It is very interest-
ing to note that in the Hindu conception of a heaven,
though there is the highest standard of living imaginable,
even there, among its denizens, are the ‘haves’ and ‘have-
nots’. Individuals who perform meritorious acts reach the
heavens to enjoy the wealth of goodness so acquired and,

therefore, one who has acquired a larger wealth of merits while living *here* should necessarily come to enjoy *there* a subtler joy and a more intense life of satisfaction. Of them the most powerful and mighty, the most splendourous and luxurious life will necessarily be of Indra. The Self is as Indra among the Gods, ruling over the others, controlling and directing them, and organising their lives so that they may enjoy their highest standards of living.

“*Of the sense organs I am the mind*”—The above phrase that the Self is “Indra among the Gods”, itself contains their subjective idea that It is the mind among the *indriyas*, to those who are well-fed upon the Upanishadic lore. The word ‘*Indra*’ in sanskrit can also be dissolved as the King of the sense-organs*. We have earlier mentioned that the term Deva since it means ‘to illumine’, they are the sense-organs, and among them, naturally, the mind is the patron and the controller, without which the sense-organs will not have synchronised any intelligent field of activity.

“*In all beings I am the Chetana*”—This phrase is generally translated as “I am the Consciousness (Chetana) among the conscious”. This is not a happy rendering. In the Consciousness Pure, there are no beings and, therefore, the translation would falsify Vedantā. The term *Chetana* is generally used in our text-books to denote “that expression of *Chaitanya* when functioning through the medium of an intellect”. Of all the beings I am the intelligence (*Buddhi*) would be more appropriate inasmuch as the children of this Darwinian Age will not find it very difficult to appreciate this idea. Of all things created in the world the most magnificent and wondrous item is the mysterious power called the intelligence which has not yet been brought

* “*Indriyanam Raja—Indrah.*”

within the understanding of the modern scientists beyond certain vague and fanciful theories.*

रुद्राणां शंकरश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।

वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥ २३ ॥

23. *rudranam sankaras ca smi*
vitteso yaksaraksamam
vasunam pavakas ca smi
meruh sikharinam aham

रुद्राणाम् - Among the Rudras, शङ्करः - Sankara, च - and, अस्मि - (I) am, वित्तेशः Vittesa or Kubera, यक्षरक्षसाम् - among Yakshas and Rakshasas, वसूनाम् - among Vasus, पावकः - Pavaka, च - and, अस्मि - (I) am, मेरुः - Meru, शिखरिणाम् - of mountains, अहम् - I.

23. And among the Rudras I am Sankara ; among the Yakshas and Rakshasas the Lord of wealth (Kubera) ; among the Vasus I am Pavaka (Agni) ; and among the mountains I am the Meru.

“Of Rudras I am Sankara”—In reading these portions Modern students must remember that Geeta was especially

* The grey-matter and the white-matter of the brain, the theory of secretion, the glow of the nerve tips, the thought-centres in the brain, the frontal lobe of the brain and the percentage of dark granulations in it ..are the theory-fables that have been floated like soap-bubbles from the despairing confusions of the western physiologists.

sung for the treatment of one particular Arjuna. No individual can stand apart from the influences of his age; everyone of us, whether we like it or not, is a child of our own age, and a product of the floating ideas that are popular in our times. Krishna was constrained to talk to Arjuna in his language. Traditionally Arjuna was a product of the Vedic lore and, therefore, Krishna could make references to what the soldier already knew. Here again is one such brilliant example, which refers to the contents of the Vedas.

A team of 'deities of destruction' together constitute the Rudras in the Vedic belief. The foreign missionaries that sneak into this country, in their shameless ignorance and, perhaps, in their biological incapacity to conceive such incomparable ideas misquote and misinterpret our vedic traditions. Historical tragedy of our country during the last two hundred years gave these looters of our ancient culture a respectable place in our society and they scrambled to become, under the direct patronage of our foreign rulers, the teachers of our children. The missionary colleges and schools have been the dangerous dens for minting out counterfeits of educated Hindus. We are all at present representing in ourselves this forged wealth, which looks, from a distance, as education but on careful analysis it is bound to be useless for transaction.

The conception of Rudra, as the Deity of Destruction is to be recognised by every student of life, because destruction is a necessary precedent to every construction. The flower must die away to yield its place for the fruit to mature. The fruit must perish for the seeds to come out. The seeds must rot to bring forth the seedling. Thus, in every progress there is a continuous stream of destruction. This is recognised by the subtlest thinkers that were ever

born among men, called the Rishis, and in their full understanding they fearlessly respected and adored the blessed Deity of Creative Destruction[†].

“*I am the Treasurer of wealth among the Yakshas and Rakshasas*”—The Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Heavens is described in the Puranas as Kubera, a monstrous, ugly creature, three-footed, fat and short, with a spreading belly, a small head and eight protruding teeth. This Divine Cashier is helped by *Yakshas* and *Rakshasas*—an equally ugly, materialistic, heartless breed—in protecting their treasures. It is interesting to note how the Indian Rishis were typically against Capitalism and how they cartooned the master-of-wealth in such a grotesque caricature, so ugly that it cannot even bring about an indulgent smiling on our lips.

Is the extension at his belt an unavoidable symptom of his hoarded wealth? Is the third leg only a substantial walking stick without which the rich fat Keeper-of-wealth cannot drag himself from his money bags to his dining table? Are the rest of the twenty-four teeth, worn out by his over-eating? These are the doubts that come to any one who reads carefully the elaborate description of this Banker of heavens' wealth. In short, our Rishis entertained a disgust for the low paper toys of wealth and they had nothing but supreme contempt for those who are living upon the sap of the country to fatten and gorge themselves with an unnecessary amount of human fodder.

“*Of the Vasus, I am the Pavaka*”—There are eight *Vasus* and they are the Vedic deities presiding over the seasons. In Chandogya Upanishad we have a reference where it is

* “Sam Karoti Yah Samkara” He who does kalyan (sam) is Sankara.

described that the mouth of these *Vasus* is fire: Here the word mouth may be conceived of as the instrument of enjoyment and experience. Therefore it means here that the Self is the very source from which we gain all our experiences of all seasons.

The six seasons which the world outside can give us and the two seasons which the mind supplies us with viz. joy and sorrow, together constitute the eight seasons mentioned here. Even the spring-time flowers will be shedding tears for us if we had at that time a tragic bereavement, while even the naked trees of the autumn season will be quivering with joy for us if we had in that season a joy of success, unexpected and complete. Therefore, the six external seasons get themselves constantly coloured by the two internal seasons, and all of them are experienced by us only when we are under the grace of our own Consciousness within.

“*Of all the peaks I am Meru*”—A mythological mountain, believed to be the centre of the Universe according to the ancient Hindu Geography is *Meru*. On the top of it lives the Divine and below it, lie scattered the Seven Islands that constitute the world. Of them the *Jambu-dweep* is the centre (Asia?). *Meru* is conceived of as having an altitude of seven to eight thousand miles. And from the top of it the *Ganga* flows in all directions, it is described. This statement has made many to believe that it may be *Himalayas*—which is not, of course, very unsatisfactory. We would rather believe it to be a mystical phraseology representing some special “field of influence” having its base in the *Jambu-dweep* and its extent rising up to the peak described above, from where *Spiritual Knowledge** flows out in all the four sides to bless all the islands.

* Which had been often described in the sastras as *Ganga*, *Gnana Ganga*, *Akasara Ganga*, *Mother Ganga*, etc.

Continuing to indicate the status of the Self among the things of the known world :

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।

सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥ २४ ॥

24. *purodhasam ca mukhyam mam
viddhi partha brhaspatim
senaninam aham skandah
sarasam asmi sagarah*

पुरोधसाम् - Among the household priests,
च - and, मुख्यम् - the chief, माम् - Me, विद्धिः -
know, पार्थ - O Partha, बृहस्पतिम् - Brihaspathi,
सेनानीनाम् - among generals, अहम् - I, स्कन्दः -
Skanda, सरसाम् - among lakes, अस्मि - (I) am,
सागरः - the ocean.

24. And among the household priests, O Partha, know
Me the chief, Brihaspathi ; among generals, I am
Skanda ; among lakes, I am the ocean.

“*Of the household priests know Me the Chief, Brihas-
pati*”—The Lord of the planet Jupiter, Brihaspati, is
mentioned in the Rig Veda as *Brahmanaspati* which is self-
explanatory of his status among the Hosts of the Heavens.
He is considered as the spiritual teacher for the celestial.
Similarly, the Lord indicates that “*I am Skanda*,”—the Son
of Siva, the Peacock rider and the Welder of the Spear—
“*among the generals*.”

“*Of waters, I am the Ocean*”—In all these examples it
is quite clear that the Lord is indicating Himself to be not
only transcendent but also immanent. Especially the last

analogy of the series in the stanza proves itself to be a typical example. No doubt the waters of the Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu or Kaveri, the waters of the various lakes of the world, of the ponds of the villages, in the irrigation canals—all, individually, seem to have no relationship with the waters of the ocean that embrace the world. And yet, it is a fact that but for the waters of the ocean all these rivers and water-pools would have long ago dried up. Similarly, in the sentient and the insentient beings and things of the world, though individually they might look as if they have no direct relationship with the Infinite Ocean of Truth, the Lord indicates that but for It the phenomenal world would have long ago ended its existence.

Still elaborating the same idea :

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।

यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥ २५ ॥

25. maharsinam bhrigur aham
giram asmy ekam aksaram
yajnanam japayajnosmi
sthavaranam himalayah

महर्षीणाम् - Among the great Rishis, भृगुः - Bhrigu, अहम् - I, गिराम् - among words, अस्मि - (I) am, एकम् - the one, अक्षरम् - syllable, यज्ञानाम् - among sacrifices, जपयज्ञः - the sacrifice of silent repetition, अस्मि - (I) am, स्थावराणाम् - among immovable things, हिमालयः - Himalaya s.

25. Among the great Rishis I am Bhrigu; among words I am the one syllable "OM"; among sacrifices I am the sacrifice of silent repetition (Japa-Yagna); among immovable things the Himalayas.

"Of the great Rishis I am Bhrigu"—We had already seen that Bhrigu is the Chief of the Seven Rishis mentioned earlier in the chapter*. Bhrigu is the one who recites the *Manava Dharmasastra*, wherein he is recognised as Manu's son. In the Padma Purana, however, it is described that the Rishies selected Bhrigu and sent him on a mission to the heavens to test and discover who among the Trinity was the greatest. Bhrigu had interviews with Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara, and he at last reported on the conclusions of his observations, declaring that of the lot, Vishnu was the most Divine, inasmuch as he had the kindly heart to worship the feet that kicked him to *wakefulness* while he was asleep.

"Of words I am the One-syllabled"—Words are symbols of sounds to express one's thoughts. A speaker with his words tries to raise in the bosom of his listeners a pattern of thought-experiences which the speaker feels in himself. Thus, the word 'tomato' is the sound symbol which creates in the mind of all those who know the 'tomato' the same experience. To bless those who do not react to this word, but stand confused, the speaker will necessarily try to use a series of words arranged into sentences and the sentences will be properly marshalled to give a fuller picture of what the 'tomato' is. To the extent the describer can mould the form, colour, taste and qualities of the 'tomato' in the thought-world of the listener, to that extent the listener also

* Ibid 2 & 6.

can mentally experience what the speaker said. Thus, ordinarily language is full of such sound-symbols, to indicate experiences and to transact in thought.

If ordinary word-symbols indicate only the finite, the Rishis thought that they must conceive a word-symbol to indicate the Eternal. Thus, they discovered the one-syllabled word 'OM'* which has been recognised later as the greatest *mantra* in all the *Vedas* and traditionally, till of recent times, this had been in the spiritual world, the one sound idol used as a prop for early meditators.

“*Of sacrifices I am the Japa*”—Madhusudana Saraswati indicates that *Japa Yajna* has been given this glorious status, because, in it there is no cattle sacrifice. This is very superficial if not utterly childish. *Japa* is a technique by which the ‘Japist’ tries to maintain a constant stream of the same divine thoughts in his mind. All other sacrifices—be it on the Path of Devotion or on the Path of Action, or on the Path of Knowledge—are, whether ritualistic or meditative, attempts for a given period of time, by constraining the mind to one channel of deliberate thought. As such in one form or the other “thought repetition” of the same species is the attempt in all *sadhanas*. No doubt, *Japa* is a path in itself, having an independent existence of its own; but, at the same time, it, in one form or other, is the core of all other paths.

* An entire and exhaustive description of this word constituted of the three sounds A, U, M—how each sound indicates the waking, the dream and the deep sleep states; how its last lengthening ‘M’ indicates the fourth state Turiya; and how in the silence between two successive OMs is the Infinite and the Eternal indicated—please refer Sri Swamiji’s discourses on *Mandukya Karika* Chapter I.

Thus *Japa Yajna* is glorified here not only because it is the essential core of all other *Yajnas* but also because it transcends them all as an independent Path in itself. Unbroken remembrance of the Self* is the very experience of Perfection and the moment of perfect intellectual tranquility—*Samadhi*.

“*Of things motionless, I am the Himalayas*”—The motionless is conceived as the inert, the insentient. Mud and rocks, trees and plants, birds and animals intermixed with the splendour of the phenomenal might, such as the whistling storms, the tearing thunders, the roaring rivers cascading through silent valleys, the still pools of eternal lakes faithfully reflecting the blue sky and multiplying the mountain peaks in its love-lorn hearts—all these together constitute the picture of all mountains. But, “of them”, the Lord says, “I am the Himalayas”. Certainly He gives to the Himalayan ranges, a more glorious and a diviner status, because, of its special significance. Unlike anywhere else in the world, in India, the Himalayas had been the secret peaks where man sat to shoot his thoughts even beyond the frontiers of his intellect and had successfully done it, as never before by any living creature from the beginningless history of the world till to-day.

Not satisfied yet, the Lord is desperately trying through finer examples and words to convey his Infinite glory to the data-mongering, worldly, intellect of his warrior-friend, Arjuna :

* “Nitya Nirantara Anavachinna Brahmatmeti Smaran : Tadeva Atma Sakshatkarah”.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।

गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥ २६ ॥

26. *asvatthah sarvavrksanam*
devarsinam ca naradah
gandharvanam citrarathah
siddhanam kapilo munih

अश्वत्थः - Aswatha, सर्ववृक्षाणाम् - among all trees, देवर्षीणाम् - among Divine Rishis, च - and, नारदः - Narada, गन्धर्वाणाम् - among Gandharvas, चित्ररथः - Chitraratha, सिद्धानाम् - among the Siddhas or the Perfected ones, कपिलः - Kapila, मुनिः - Sage.

26. Among all trees (I am) the Pipal-tree; among Divine Rishis, Narada; among Gandharvas, Chitraratha; among the Perfected ones, the Muni Kapila.

“Of all the trees I am the Pipal-tree”—Both in its magnitude and life-span, the Pipal tree can be considered as the “all-pervading” and the “Immortal” inasmuch as it lives generally for centuries. Also the Pipal is a tree which the Hindus have learnt to worship, and there is a divinity attached to it. It is also a fact that the Aswattha brings up in our mind fresh memories of the Upanishadic* comparison of the same for the *samsar*. Later in the Geeta itself† we have a mention of the Pipal tree as representing the pluralistic phenomenal world that has shot up to spread itself like

* Kathopanishad : II-VI 1.

† Geeta Chapter XV. 1.

an apparent mushroom of false sorrows over dreamy nothingness.

“*Of the Devarshis I am Narada*”—Of the heavenly seers Krishna describes himself to be as Narada, a favourite figure in our legends. In our *Puranas*, Narada is described as a great devotee of Hari; he is not only one who works as a great seer among the celestials, but he often comes down to the world to play the deliberate fool and ultimately guide the deluded mortals to the parlour of the Heavens. Perhaps, Krishna, being himself a great missionary, comes to entertain a greater respect for Narada, because of his missionary zeal and enthusiasm. Many are the converts whom Narada won for the heavens as described in our *Puranas*. A missionary cannot but feel a comradeship with another working in the same field, and there is no greater tie of identification than the similarity of aspiration.

‘Gandharvas’ are the mythological concept of subtle entities who constitute the celestial choir who entertain the denizens of the heavens with their art and music. In short, they are the stars of the entertainment in heaven. Among them Chitraradha is the most brilliant genius who had been perhaps maintaining the title of the best singer up there for many centuries.

“*Of the Siddhas, I am the Muni Kapila*”—Siddhas are not those magic-mongers who can tell us the names of the horses that will win in this week-end races, or those who will peep over the present and read our future or those that can give us a sacred and secret talisman for winning elections or for keeping illicit money or for compelling affection and respect from others even when we know that we deserve it not! This is the sad plight into which we have now so fully fallen that in India out of every hundred, two persons, who

know how to trade upon the credulity of the rest, live a sumptuous life, fattening themselves upon the ample foolishness in the rest of the ninety-eight !

The term *siddha* in sanskrit indicates the one who has achieved the Goal (*sadhya*) and, therefore, it means the Perfected One. Among the Men-of-realisation, therefore, Krishna says that I am Muni Kapila. The term *Muni* need not bring into our mind the traditional picture supplied by illiterate painters as an aged, silver-haired, almost naked, *fakir*, generally roaming about where others will not dare to enter, eating things, which only the vegetarian cattle will consume—in short, a strange creature of the forests, rather than a decent man of the town. *Muni* is a term in Sanskrit derived from the word *Manan* which is the ‘art of reflection’* The term *Muni* therefore only means a thinker; “*Of the thinkers I am Kapila*”.

Kapila, the author of the Sankhyan Philosophy has been here particularly chosen out for this great status, as the best among all thinkers, because, Geeta mainly follows the Sankhyan Philosophy. In fact, Vedanta is entirely built upon the theories propounded by the Sankhyan philosophers, with only few differences, some of them are, of course, upon the very fundamentals. The very term *Sankhya* means, “the logical sequence of thought in any intellectual argument”. The arguments are accepted in Geeta but in some conclusions it departs from the Sankhyan conceptions. For example, the Sankhyans believe in the plurality of the Selves while Geeta follows the Brahma-Sutras and the Sankara-concept of the non-dual Brahman, wherein due to the play of the mind and intellect the pluralistic perceptions have risen up temporarily to dance and frisk about in the all enveloping beam of Truth.

* Mananaseelatwat Muni.

Because the Lord uses the frame-work of thoughts in the Sankhyan Philosophy to paint his picture of the one Truth, Absolute and Eternal, in His Divine Song, the special glory of comparing Himself has been given to Kapila the promoter of the Sankhyan philosophy.

Gurgling within himself with a sense of not having delivered the goods yet, the Lord continues :

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।

ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥ २७ ॥

27. *uccaihsravasam asvanam
viddhi mam amrtodbhavam
airavatam gajendranam
naranam ca naradhipam*

उच्चश्रवसम् - Uchchairsravas, अश्वानाम् - among horses, विद्धि - know, माम् - Me, अमृतोद्भवम् - born of nectar, ऐरावतम् - Airavata, गजेन्द्राणाम् - among lordly elephants, नराणाम् - among men, च - and, नराधिपम् - the king.

27. Know Me among horses as Uchchairsravas, born of Amrita, among lordly elephants the Airavata, and among men, the King.

The Pauranic story of the churning of the Milky Ocean by both the Gods and the Demons for the purpose of getting out of it the Nectar * is very famous. During that churning

* Ambrosia—Amrita.

very many wondrous things presented themselves as bye-products which were collected and distributed to deserving deities, and the main work of the churning was continued with non-stop diligence and enthusiasm, until they gained what they wanted.

The symbolism in the story is quite evident. Man is continuously struggling to reach the Immortal by a re-discovery of the Soul, through the churning of the very purity in himself, between the repeated tensions of the good and the bad. In his total progress in the realms of the inward perfections it is quite natural that he comes to discover in himself new powers and faculties (*Siddhies* and *Riddhies*) the appearance of which should not detract the consistent effort of the seeker until ultimately the realisation of Peace is gained by him.

One of the presentations that came up during the churning process, was the Winged-horse, mighty and powerful called the *Uchchaisravas*, and the White-elephant, '*Iravata*'. Both of them were presented to the King of the Gods, Indra. Altogether it is described that thirteen such tempting objects of might and glory, of supernatural powers presented, themselves during the churning. With this understanding the stanza stands perfectly clear.

In the scheme of the analogies given here it is interesting to note how there is a systematic pattern formed. In the opening he finished the Vedic references—then he slowly came down to such of the references as have a mention both in the Vedas and in the Puranas—and then he steadily reached to purely Pauranic references, as in the present stanza.

Continuing, the Lord says :

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।

प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥ २८ ॥

28. *ayudhanam aham vajram*
dhenunam asmi kamadhuk
prajanas ca smi kandarpah
sarpanam asmi vasukih

आयुधानाम् Among weapons, अहम् - I, वज्रम् - the thunderbolt, धेनूनाम् - among cows, अस्मि - (I) am, कामधुक् - Kamadhuk, प्रजनः - the progenitor, च - and, अस्मि - (I) am, कन्दर्पः - Kandarpa (Kamdev), सर्पाणाम् - among serpents, अस्मि - (I) am, वासुकिः - Vasuki.

28. Among weapons I am the thunderbolt; among cows I am Kamadhuk; I am Kandarpa, the Cause for off-springs; among serpents I am Vasuki.

“Of weapons I am the thunderbolt”—‘Vajra’ is an item in the divine artillery which cannot be ever shattered. The Vedic legend explains how a great seer, Dadheechi, volunteered his own rib-bone for the construction of this secret weapon to annihilate a demon*, who was challenging to shatter the peace of the heavens.

Of the cows I am the Kamadhuk—This strange animal from which we can milk out all our desires, whatever that be, *kamadhuk*, is also one of the early by-products that rose up during the churning of the Milky Ocean †.

* Vrithrasura.

† Subjectively it seems that it is nothing other than the Sankalpa sakti that will automatically be added on to an individual, as he increases his powers of concentration and progresses in his inward integration.

“*Of all the causes of off-springs, I am the Kandarpa*”—The Cupid, the God of love, of the Indian concept is thought of as a mischievous boy, chubby and lively, ever carrying with Himself His bow-of-smile, with five flower-tipped arrows, each meant to smother one sense-organ. The suggestion is a biological truth. Procreation is not merely an animal act of insemination, or a vegetable-act of cross-pollination, but it is according to the Science of Sex (*Kamasastra*) in India, a fulfilment of all passionate urges that express themselves through all the sense-organs. A philosopher is a perfect scientist and as such he has none of the false shyness, which is generally expressed by the immoral people when they parade themselves to be chandan-coated puritans. Vedantins and teachers, * when they talk of the sex-life, are as much brutally open as the professors are in a medical college.

“Of all the causes of the Off-springs”, the Lord declares, “I am the Cupid”, who in himself, as the Lord of Love, represents in the field of sensuality the total satisfaction of the physical, mental and intellectual sheaths in man

“*Of the snakes, I am Vasuki*”—‘Vasuki’ is a serpent described in our Mythology as ever living on Siva’s ring-finger as an adornment. Though so small as to become a ring on the finger of the Lord, it was this ‘Vasuki’ who volunteered himself to serve as a rope in the churning process of the milky ocean. This naturally reminds one of the Upanishadic declarations‡ that it is the minutest of the minute and the greatest of the great. Naturally, it is very apt that the Lord declares himself to be a “Vasuki among the

* Refer Aitareyopanishad—II. 1-1-6. There is an open and clear talk which is typical of the Upanishad—pages 77-94.

‡ Refer Swamiji’s Discourses on Kathopanishad. I-II—20.

snakes". The term *Sarpa* is to be rightly understood in contrast with the *Nagas* mentioned in the next stanza. *Sarpa* means single-hood ; while *Nagas* are multi-hooded.

Singing in the same tune, the Singer-Divine sings of His own songful glory :

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।

पितृणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥ २९ ॥

29. *anantas ca smi naganam*
varuno vadasam aham
pitṛnam aryama ca smi
yamah samyamataam aham

अनन्तः - Ananta, च - and, अस्मि - (I) am, नागानाम् - among Nagas, वरुणः - Varuna, यादसाम् - among water-deities, अहम् - I, पितृणाम् - among the Pitris or ancestors, अर्यमा - Aryama, च - and, अस्मि - (I) am, यमः - Yama, संयमताम् - among governors, अहम् - I.

29. I am Ananta among Nagas ; I am Varuna of water-deities ; Aryaman of Pitris or ancestors I am ; among controllers, I am Yama.

“*Of the Nagas I am Ananta*”—“Nagas’ mean the manyhooded serpents, and of them the thousand-hooded Sesha Naga is the one, that has been described as forming the bed for Lord Vishnu to recline in His Yoga-Sleep, Lakshmi His consort remains massaging His feet, and a Lotus rising from His sacred Naval (*Nabhi*), is the seat for the Creator, Brahmaji of the Trinity, to sit and fulfil his creation. The Vaishnavites especially in South India worship

this deity—and alas! very few know the subjective significance of this objective representation. Naturally, when the foreign-paid perverted missionaries and their hosts of new converts criticise the picture, the orthodox Vaishnavites close their ears, poor folk, and retreat in all hurry, physically saving themselves, but mentally molested and intellectually ulcerated!

Sad indeed is their plight. And the responsibility for this wretched ignorance must be shared by us, the Brahmin class, and the Gurus of this country, who had been sadly, criminally, neglecting the faithful. Unless we now learn to give up our soul-killing orthodox prejudices and gather the courage to study again our scriptures, we, as a cultural unit fast ebbing away at present, shall soon die out*.

Glorious descriptions of the Seshha Naga is given, as a thousand-mouthed serpent of inconceivable length twined itself spirally, forming a comfortable, though slimy, spring cushion for the Eternal to lie, conditioned with activity and sleep, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. The Supreme conditioned by agitations (*Vikshepa*) and veiling (*Avarana*) becomes in his 'unactivity' the God Principle†, expressing as the Creator and Sustainer and the Destroyer. This is possible only when the Self is resting upon a bed of ego-centric misconceptions, which express themselves as the mental-serpent.

And it needs no philosopher's acute intelligence for the average man to realise that his mind is the only conceivable

* Not that I visualise this tragedy in spite of the present chronic orthodoxy disease: if needs be we may readily perform even some surgery to save the Hindu Society.

† Refer Swamiji's Discourses on Kenopanishad—The Rise and Fall of man.

single thing in the Universe that has got thousand-mouths to demand, at one and the same time, a thousand variety of things, in thousand different languages! The Pure Awara-ness, resting on the mind—conditioned by the urge-to-create and a loving attachment to maintain what is created—is the Blue Divine Infinite, clothed in ‘yellow’, resting in the hushed silence of its creative enthusiasm

We are not now very much concerned about this significance of Vishnu, represented as reclining on the Sesha-Naga. Here Krishna means only that among the many-hooded serpents He is the mightiest and the most divine, because he is the very substratum upon which Vishnu, the Sustainer, and Brahmaji the Creator of the multiple world, exist and function.

“*Of the Water-beings I am Varuna*”—‘Varuna’ is a Vedic conception of the Spirit governing the Waters, the third of the five Great Elements. Deifying the Elemental Forces in the phenomenal happenings, was the method of adoration and worship of the early Vedic period. It was only later that we started the Pauranic tradition of humanising Gods, and get into the muddy pool of religious differences, sectarian prejudices and credal warfare between colonies of ignorant folks, gathering round a Jerusalem-master or a Brindavan Boy or a Mecca-messenger. Varuna is conceived of as half-fish and half-man almost something like Arnold’s Merman. He is the Ruler of the Oceans, the Lord of all Waters.

“*Of the Pitrus, I am Aryaman*”—In Hinduism death is one of the experiences in life, when the Subtle-body chooses to leave permanently its present residence within a given physical structure. The mind-intellect-equipment, maintaining a separate ego-centric concept in itself, continues

its career of existence and it is roughly called by the common folk as the 'departed soul' or the 'ancestor'.

These together live in a world of their own, called the world-of-the manes (*Pitruloka*). We have already discussed the Vedic conception of the six children of the twelve *Adityas*, each presiding over a month of the year. Of these, *Aryama* is one who is also the ruler of the World of the Ancestors.

“*Of the Controllers, I am Yama*”—Yama is the mythical picture of the Lord of Death, the Chief Messenger of the Annihilator. In India, we worship the terrible, the sad and the tragic, because, to us God is the Substratum for both the good and the bad, for the pleasant and the unpleasant. We are not satisfied by any theory of compromise, wherein we reject in God any association with what we do not like.

Whether we like it or not, the Principle of Death is the Governing factor that controls and regulates life, and at every moment prepares a progressive field for creative developments everywhere. The childhood must die before youth can come to express itself. I must leave my high school to enter the College. Step by step I must die in order that I may be born into the next step. Progress in itself is a partial picture of life; it is only a squint-eyed vision of life's total dynamism. Every development is to be preceded by a corresponding destruction. Annihilation, contributing thus to the positive progress, is called Death's own creative art.

No new thing can be created unless correspondingly we are also destroying that which was existing before. This assertion is but a logical conclusion that we have to arrive

at when we sufficiently digest the observed physical laws of the world that “no two things can ever remain at one and the same period of time occupying one and the same space”. When a painter paints a flower, he not only pours his colour on the canvas to paint his subject, but his creative art is a constant destruction of the surface coating that was earlier given on the canvas! As I type on and on these lines, it is not only an art of placing the letters rightly to form the words and arranging the words to build the sentences and the sentences lining up to make my ideas expressed, but I am also destroying at every stage the common whiteness of the paper on which these letters are typed.

When life is thus totally viewed there is as much importance for the Principle of Death as for the Principle of Creation.

But for the Death, functioning intelligently at almost the same speed as the rate of Creation, there would have been an inordinate flour of things in life, and life itself would have got choked by its own magnitude and number. If Death were not, my friend, your great-great-great-grand father of your great-great-great-grand father might be still living in your own two-roomed flat!! Even when there is a slight rise in population the entire economic balance and the political peace in the world get shattered. What will not happen if Death were not as sincerely serving us as the Creator? Indeed, of all the controllers, Death alone is the Chief, and the analogy given here is irreplaceable and apt.

Working himself up into a pleasant enthusiasm the Lord continues :

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।

मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥ ३० ॥

30. *prahladas ca smi daityanam
kalah kalayatam aham
mrganam ca mrgendro ham
vainateyas ca paksinam*

प्रह्लादः - Prahlada, च - and, अस्मि - (I) am,
दैत्यानाम् - among Daityas, कालः - time, कलयताम् -
among reckoners, अहम् - I, मृगाणाम् - among
beasts, च - and, मृगेन्द्रः - the lord of beasts (lion),
अहम् - I, वैनतेयः - son of Vinata, Garuda, च - and,
पक्षिणाम् - among birds.

30. I am Prahlada among Daityas; among reckoners
I am Time; among beasts I am the Lord of
beasts (Lion); and Vainateya (Garuda) among
birds.

“*I am Prahlada among the Daityas*”—The story of
Prahlada, very famous among the Hindus, is the biography
of a boy-devotee, who with adamant faith and devotion
challenged his father Hiranyakasipu in defence of his faith
in Hari and stood many a trial and persecution. According
to his father and the brood, descendants of the Children-of-
Diti *, goodness and righteousness are to be challenged and
God himself to be negated. According to Hiranyakasipu,
in his kingdom all should pray † only to the State and not
to the Lord of the Universe ‡. This reminds us of some of

* Daityas

† Hiranyayanamah.

‡ OM Nano Narayanayah.

the modern Father-land-theories and the laughable buffonery in the Secular-state-creeds. How Prahlada happened to be born with this firm and heroic cultural back-ground is explained in the story which reveals that ancient India knew full well, and practised successfully too, the art of pre-natal education*.

“*Of reckoners I am Time*”—The logicians, forming among themselves a staunch group of Hindu Philosophers, supporting not only the concept of pluralism but also challenging the very existence of the God-Principle, have arrived at their final conclusion, through their purely intellectual deductions, that Time is an Eternal Factor, wherein the individual mind-and-intellect comes to play as instrumental causes to split It up and see in It the play of the past, the present and the future. According to them it is this “play of the mind” that bombards Time and makes It look as though It were finite and momentary. Perhaps, Vyasa had this concept in his mind, when he tried to bring this analogy to express the Infinite Substratum supporting the finite multiplicity.

There are some commentators who rather accept this analogy as a simple-looking direct statement; and, according to them, Time, which is beginningless and endless, in the relative field is the ultimate measurer of all things.

“*Of the beasts, I am the Lord of Beasts and among the birds, I am the Son of Vinata*”—The majesty and grandeur, the dignity and manliness of the lion among the animals, makes him the Royal Lion. Its flight, its powers of perception and the altitudes to which it can climb makes Guruda †, the King of birds. There is a mythological story

* Refer Swamiji's Discourses on Aitareya Upanishad II. i—(1).

† The white-necked eagle is the vehicle of Hari, the Protector.

in India that Garuda was the family of birds born in Vinata, the noble wife of a King, who however, got fascinated by his younger wife, Kadru, the wicked, who brought forth the serpents.

Further :

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।

झषाणांमकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ ३१ ॥

31. *pavanah pavatam asmi
ramah satrabhratam aham
jhasanam makaras ca smi
srotasam asmi jahnavi*

पवनः - The wind, पवताम् - among purifiers,
अस्मि - (I) am, रामः - Rama, शस्त्रभृताम् - among
wielders of weapons (warriors), अहम् - I,
झषाणाम् - among fishes, मकरः - Makara (shark),
च - and, अस्मि - (I) am, स्रोतसाम् - among rivers,
अस्मि - (I) am, जाह्नवी - the Ganges.

31. Among purifiers I am the wind ; among warriors
Rama am I ; among fishes I am the shark ;
among rivers I am the Ganges.

“*Of the cleansing things, I am the Wind*” : No anti-septic or sanitary equipment is so efficient to clean a place as the sun and the wind. If the wind alone is indicated here it is because of Vyasa's perfect understanding that wind can rise only when the sun is hot. Where there is constant wind there sun also must be available ; in a cave there can be neither sun-light nor movement of the air.

“ *Of those who are wielders of weapon I am Rama* ”
The Hero of Ramayana, Lord Sri Ramachandraji, is a character that has been delineated by Valmiki, the first poet in India to use metrical compositions and write out a full-fledged *Kavya*. Sri Rama has been painted very elaborately as a perfect man in all aspects of his life: perfect as a son, as a husband, as a brother, as a friend, as a fighter, as a teacher, as a ruler and even as a father. Such an all-round perfect one—his perfections shining out all the more against a light background of seeming imperfections and extremely teasing and confusing circumstances—should necessarily be the noblest hand that ever wielded an honest bow to shoot out the most creative arrows!

“ *Of the fishes I am the shark and of the rivers I am Jahnavi* ”—The Story goes that Saint Jahnu drank the Ganges dry, and later on, for the redemption of man let her out, to flow through his ears. The conception of the Ganges, we have already indicated earlier, is a symbolism freely used among the Hindus, to represent the spiritual culture of India. The wealth of the Rishi-knowledge as it reaches a seeker at the seat of his meditation, makes him at first to swallow and dry it up. “Drinking at the fountain of Knowledge”, “to satiate the thirst for knowledge”, etc., are usual expressions in almost all languages of the world that have some slavery to the Mother of all Languages, the Sanskrit.

The knowledge so drunk in itself cannot make a true philosopher as understood by the Aryans in India. In the East one becomes a sage only when one has accomplished his knowledge in the fulfilment of experiencing the Truth, in himself directly. Sage Jahnu in this symbolical story through intense meditation digested his knowledge to make

it as personal experience, and then gave this wisdom out into the world during his necessary and unavoidable missionary work.

Herein the stream of knowledge is described as having flown through his ears. It is indeed a brilliant poetic conception to connect the term *Śruti*, which indicates the contents of the Upanishads which are what the masters declared to the world and what the disciples heard from their own teachers. In India, teachers come from time to time to reinterpret the Ancient Wisdom in the context of their own age, only after having gained their own personal experiences of the Vedic Truth-declarations. Without the stamp of realisation no teacher worth the name dared to come into the world to propagate the old Truth in the new Language.

Of the many names by which the sacred river Ganges is known in India, this particular name has been chosen here in order to emphasize the above-mentioned special implications.

And also :

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥ ६२ ॥

32. *sarganam adir antas ca*
madhyam ca va ham arjuna
adhyatmavidya vidyanam
vadah pravaclatam aham

सर्गाणाम् – Among creations आदिः – beginning,
अन्तः – the end, च – and, मध्यम् – the

middle, च - and, एव - also, अहम् - I, अर्जुन - O Arjuna, अध्यात्मविद्या - the science of Self, विद्यानाम् - among sciences, वादः - logic, प्रवदताम् - among controversialists, अहम् - I.

32. Among creations I am the beginning, the middle and also the end, O Arjuna ; among sciences I am the Science of the Self, and I (am) the logic in all arguments.

“ *Of Creations, I am the beginning, and the end, and the middle too*”—In this there is an echo of the general statement with which Lord started his discourses in which his infinite glories were enumerated earlier in this chapter*. However, *there* he explained how he is the Essential Stuff in all individual beings and here it is a more universal statement wherein he indicates how He is the Essence in all creation.

No substance can ever remain divorced from the essential stuff with which it is made. No gold ornament can be made without the metal gold ; no wave from the ocean can be packed separately for the Himalayas ; no mud-pot can exist divorced from the mud. The material cause is an unavoidable essence in all names and forms, and nothing can remain ever buried in its own essentiality. By the above statement Lord is indicating that, He as the Self in all, is “ *the beginning, end and the middle too* ” of all things in the Universe. The names and forms have risen up from Him, are supported by Him and shall be merged back into Him when they are destroyed.

“ *Of all knowledges I am the Knowledge of the Self* ”—Every platform thunders this Truth. From every pulpit

* Ibid 20.

in the world the faithful have been hearing such glorifications of the Science of Spirituality, and invariably, we accept them as quite natural in the mouth of the priests. Who is there who will not glorify his own production ! But, in fact, there is a greater significance in this seemingly self-advertising statement.

No doubt, there are innumerable avenues of observations, investigations and studies to gain knowledge of the world of things and beings, and their behaviours. All these knowledge-bits arrange themselves under different heads for the convenience of study as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Physiology, Psychology etc., a hundred of them. But in all these branches of knowledge the attempt of the student is to gain a '*knowledge of*' the things and happenings. In each bit of information the student has to react himself and gain a knowledge *of* it. Thus each scientific investigation ultimately fulfils itself when we have gained the '*knowledge of*' the field of our knowledge-bits, each being knowledge *conditioned by* the theme of our investigation and the object of our observation. Every Scientist is a man full of "*knowledge of*" things.

The '*knowledge of*' the sun is, no doubt, different from the '*knowledge of*' the fishes, and the '*knowledge of*' shooting is different from the '*knowledge of*' eating. But in all of them, one thing is common and that is *Knowledge*. Though there is an ocean of difference between the sun and the fish, between shooting and eating, yet, it is the same *knowledge* that plays upon these dissimilar objects, beings, functions etc., and illumine for us all of them. The Science of Self-Realisation reveals unto us this Absolute Conscious-Centre in ourselves with which we illumine all paths of knowledge and gain our '*knowledge of*' things.

Naturally, therefore, the science that explains that Knowledge-Principle without which no other ‘*knowledge of*’ things is ever possible, and which, playing upon the field of things, accomplishes our knowledge of them, should necessarily be the Science of all sciences, the best Knowledge. In the sun-light all objects are illumined. Sun-light reflected upon the lightless objects of the world makes them perceptible. Naturally, the sun is the “eye of all eyes”, the source of all perceptions. Similarly here, the Science of Spirituality is explained as the Science of all sciences.

This is not a propaganda slogan, raised by the champions of religion but it is a clear statement of truth supported by hard logic and glaring reasons

“*Of arguments I am Vada*”—The term *Pravadatam* as used here should be understood by us, according to Sankara, as the various forms of arguments—either the arrogant rejoinders (*Jalpa*) or the fatiguing destructive criticisms (*Vitanda*), or logical arguments (*Vada*)—These three types of approach are often used in all discussions in all walks of life. In *Jalpa*, the attempt is to smother opposition and their arguments by vehement criticism and bitter rejoinders spoken with an overbearing arrogance of assertions. In the case of *Vitanda*, the champion of discussion mercilessly criticises the arguments of the opposition, exposing by means fair or foul, both the real and the imaginary fallacies in their line of arguments; the aim being to blast out the edifice established by the other. The third, *Vada*, is the technique of discussion with an object to come directly to truth wherein the one arguing is trying to read the letter and the verse as directly as possible, without any hair-splitting arguments. It is evidently clear therefore, that both the former techniques (*Jalpa* and *Vitanda*) are only

strategies to soften the enemeis, while the actual thrust into the enemy lines and the real conquest is only through *Vada*.

Further :

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।

अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३३ ॥

33. *aksaranam akaro smi*
dvandvah samasikasya ca
aham eva ksayah kalo
dhata ham visvatomukhah

अक्षराणाम् - Among letters, अकारः - the letter A, अस्मि - (I) am, द्वन्द्वः - the dual, सामासिकस्य - among all compounds, च - and, अहम् - I, एव - verily, अक्षयः - the inexhaustible or everlasting, कालः - time, धाता - the dispenser, अहम् - I, विश्वतोमुखः - the All-faced (or having faces in all directions).

33. Among letters the letter 'A' I am and the dual (Co-ordinates) among all compound, I am verily, the inexhaustible or the everlasting time; I am the (All-faced) Dispenser (of fruits of actions) having faces in all directions.

Of the alphabets I am the letter 'A'—It is very well-known that without the help of vowels words cannot be pronounced. Of all languages, Sanskrit is particularly sweet because of the preponderance of the 'A' sound in it. In fact every letter in its combinations is to be pronounced

in Sanskrit with a shade of 'A' added, to lengthen it to its fullest sweetness. This oils up the words, and the language consequently has none of the back-firing disturbances, or the rattling nuisance or disgusting hoarseness of the other languages of the world. Because of this smooth run of 'A' sound in every letter there is a melody even between words and a lingering echo between sentences. In fact after a long chanting of a Sanskrit-text in a hall, there is for the sensitive a perceptible atmosphere of soothened music in the air that plays like a lullaby upon all the agitations of the mind and makes it coil upon itself and rest peacefully.

The sound 'A' is not only the essence in each letter of a word—not only that it transcends all these—or overflows the sentences—or floods the very atmosphere—but the sound 'A' has itself the first place among the alphabets in all languages. Realising these implications the Upanishads cry 'A' sound is the essence in all speech*.

“Of all compound words, I am the Pair”—One of the Sanskrit-forms of compounds is *Dwandwa* in which the essential elements in the components co-ordinate each other in the newly formed compound word‡. According to Sridhar, perhaps the only commentator who had tried to give us the why of this analogy, the *Dwandwa*-method of combining words is so important, among all the different types, because of this easy and direct co-ordination of the parts in it. In the context of the usage here: the Self and the Not-Self are as though mixed up together, and they constitute the world of perceptions experienced by us, but to the discriminate the component parts are distinctly clear, as clear as to an educated man the dissolution of the *Dwandwa*-compound.

* “Akaro Vai Sarva Vak”.

‡ ‘Rama and Lakshmana’ are expressed as ‘Ramalakshmenau.’

“*I alone am the Infinite Time*”: Earlier also there* was a mention that “*Of reckoners I am Time*” wherein the finite Time was mentioned, while here as a contrast the Infinite and the Absolute Time is indicated. In short, both these two statements put together mean that the Self is the Substratum for both the Absolute Concept of pure Time and the finite experiences of each moment. But for the Awareness of each fraction of time the total concept of Time is impossible, “I am immanent in each individual unit of Time and I am transcendent to serve as a substratum for the total Time”.

“*I am the Sustainer*”—Sankara commends upon this term and concludes that the Self is the sustainer of the mental impressions § and, consequently, the particular trait in a given individual which determines how he will react to the world outside.

“*Facing all quarters at once*”—This term has been exhaustively described earlier by us † where it was described that the Self is not only “one in all, but is also different from all, and in each it faces everywhere”. The entire implication of that stanza is to be read into this simple-looking phrase “Facing everywhere”. (*Sarvatho-mukhom*). In all perceptions whether physical, mental or intellectual there is the grace of the Consciousness, which is the Self, and, therefore, the phrase is irreplaceably self-expressive.

Continuing, the Lord says :

* Ibid 30

§ “Karmaphalasya Vithata.”

† Ch. IX. 15.

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्धवश्च भविष्यतम् ।

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिःक्षमा ॥ ३४ ॥

34. *mṛtyuḥ saivaharas ca ham
udbhavas ca bhaviṣyatam
kīrtiḥ śrīr vak ca narinam
smṛtir medha dhṛtiḥ kṣama*

मृत्युः - Death, सर्वहरः - all-devouring, च - and, अहम् - I, उद्धवः - the prosperity, च - and, भविष्यताम् - of those who are to be prosperous, कीर्तिः - fame, श्रीः - prosperity, वाक् - speech, च - and, नारीणाम् - of the feminine, स्मृतिः - the memory, मेधा - intelligence, धृतिः - firmness, क्षमा - forgiveness.

34. And I am all-devouring Death, and the prosperity of those who are to be prosperous ; among the feminine qualities (I am) fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, firmness and forgiveness.

*I am the all consuming Death:—*Death, the leveller, brings even the sceptre and the sword to a level with the begging bowl and the staff. Every existing thing maintains its separateness from all others only during its life time, due to its individual relationship with things and beings other than itself. After death, the wise and the fool, the good and the bad, the strong and the weak, the ruler and the ruled, all come to the dust, levelled into a uniformity that can recognise no distinction within itself.

*I am the source of all that is to be :—*The Supreme is not only a mere destroyer that destroys everything to a lifeless commonality but He is, certainly, the source of all new creations, that are to come in the future. To conceive destruction, without taking into consideration the unavoidable accompaniment of it, the new construction, is but a partial view-point. In the total and the complete vision of life as a whole, we are watching everything that the so called destruction is only a transformation or modification of the existing form of an object or scheme of things, into something dissimilar and varying. No destruction means a total blank anywhere. When we view a wave seperately we may say that after playing for a moment on the bosom of the ocean, it has got itself destroyed ; but if we view it from the standpoint of the ocean, for each wave noticed to have been destroyed there are innumerable waves that are risen up unnoticed by our limited observation.

Here we find that Krishna is mounting these ideas against its contrast contained in his immediately earlier statement. Altogether, the line stresses that the Infinite, Itself playing the game of both destruction and construction, and a continuous repetition of these two, one at the heels of the other in succession, is, in fact, what we call the finite Universe.

There are translators who would like to read a meaning as “prosperity” into the word ‘Udbhava’ in this line. This may be justified if we are in a grammarian’s school ; but, in the philosopher’s class-room this meaning is quite removed from the direct import of the word, ‘*the source of all*’. In that meaning alone can this second phrase in the first line can serve as a beautiful answer and an echoing back-round for the first half in the same line.

*Fame, fortune, speech, memory, intelligence, steadfastness, and patience, am I, of the feminine qualities :—*The Sanskrit terms conveying these abstract nouns are all feminine in gender. May be the Lord means that these qualities if ever we meet in women, they are all occasions when we can perceive a flicker of clearer divinity, than anywhere else. Again, the philosophical content of the line is perfect and beyond all criticism. It is not said that the person having these qualities is divine. Whoever be the person, and whatever be his past, on occasions when he is expressing these qualities, *through him* we can perceive a clearer vision of Life's glory.

In short, these qualities are such that when they manifest they create such adjustments in the inner equipments in man that we can perceive through him more clearly the awful vitality of Life's surge. As a transferred epithet, Lord the Self declares, that of the feminine qualities I am any one of these or all of them put together. On the wall in my room, I am in the window glass, in the framed photos and in the mirror: which means that I am seen reflected upon these reflective surfaces more brilliantly than anywhere else.

Also :

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।

मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥ ३५ ॥

35. *brhatsama tatha samnam*
gayatri chandasam aham
masanam margasirso ham
rtunam kusumakarah

बृहत्साम - Brihatsama, तथा - also, साम्नाम् - among Sama Hymns, गायत्री - Gayatri, छन्दसाम् - among metres, अहम् - I, मासानाम् - among

months, मार्गशीर्षः - November-December, अहम् - I, ऋतूनाम् - among seasons, कुसुमाकरः - the flowery season.

35. Among hymns also I am the Brihat Saman ; among metres Gayatri am I ; among months I am November - December (*Marga - Shrirsha*) ; among seasons (I am) the flowery Spring.

“ *Of the Samans I am the Brihatsama* ”—The songs of the Sama Veda are Called the *Samans*. They are all in different metres and are to be sung in different tunes. It is no easy task and the student who can sing well the Samans are those who must have spent years of practice at the feet of the Master. Of all the metres that are met with in the volume of the Sama Veda the most difficult and complicated is the metre called ‘ *Brihati* ’ ; and the Samans composed in the Brihati-metre are called the ‘ *Brihatsama* ’.

“ *Of all metres Gayatri am I* ”—Talking of metres Bhagawan seems to have all of a sudden remembered that there are different varieties of metres, and of them Gayatri is considered as the most divine and extremely powerful. Gayatri is a metre composed in three lines each fulfilled in eight syllable. This metre is considered in India with extra favour and added divinity, because the famous hymn glorifying Sun (*Savitir*), the sacred-text which is chanted by all Brahmins in their morning and evening ablutions,* is composed in this metre.

* “ Bhur Bhva Swah Tat Saviturvarenyam Bhargo Devasya Dheemahi Dhiyo yo na prachodayat ”-(Yajur Veda-36. 3) “ May we contemplate the supremely excellent, sin-destroying energy of the

In the *Chandogaya Upanishad* there is a glorification of Gayatri and the passage concludes, there, in the, Upanishad thus : “ This Supreme who is indicated in the Gayatri is All-pervading, Omniscient and Eternal. He who understands Gayatri in this way attains full and unending prosperity.”

In the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* also there is a substantial portion which describes in its typical language, meditation of the Cosmos and its substratum through Gayatri. Manu also, has made his laudations to Gayatri : “ The most exalted creator milked out this Gayatri from three Vedas. He who repeats it daily for three years unwearied attains the supreme Brahman, moves free like air and becomes subtle-bodied like *Akasa* ”.

Of all the metres none has been so uniformly glorified everywhere as Gayatri, and no *mantra* has had so far the privilege of being chanted by so many devotees, continuously for such a long number of years, in any religion of the World.

“ *Of the months I am the Margassersha* ” :—This corresponds to the English Calendar months of November and December which are the months in India when people have forgotten the fatiguing summer they have lived through, and have not yet started complaining about the cold of the winter.

resplendent One, who is all that was, is or shall ever be and the beyond, who provides three regions (Universe) and the forces operating therein, who is all knowledge, who sustains the creation in health and plenty, who is the creator of this Universe and moves it bound by his laws, that he may direct our understanding along the path-which leads to the Supreme Goal”.

“Of the seasons I am the flower bearing spring”—Spring with its colourful message and fragrant songs adds a thrill to all prospects wherever one may turn in India. Flower-valleys clothe the hills, crops cover the fields. Tanks and pools get strewn with lotus and lillies. The meadows get carpetted with grass. There is an air of celebration and festivity in the hearts of all and to crown the joyous spirit in the world the moon seems to dress herself in more glory than is usual with her.

Not only am I to be recognised among the majestic and the Divine, among the beautiful and the charming, but even among the lowest of the low, I am what I am ; for, listen :

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।

जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ ३६ ॥

36. dyutam chalayatam asmi
tejas tejasvinam aham
jayo smi vyavasayo smi
sattvam sattvavatam aham

द्यूतम् - The gambling, छलयताम् - of the fraudulent, अस्मि - (I) am, तेजः - splendour, तेजस्विनाम् - of the splendid, अहम् - I, जयः - victory, अस्मि - (I) am, व्यवसायः - determination, अस्मि - (I) am, सत्त्वम् - the goodness, सत्त्ववताम् - of the good, अहम् - I.

36. I am the gambling of the fraudulent ; I am the splendour of the splendid ; I am victory, I am determination (of those who are determined)
I am the goodness of the good.

“*Of all the deceptive games I am the dice-play*”—Geeta constitutes the discourses given by Krishna to a Prince of that time, in a spirit of great missionary zeal to re-discover for the Prince the vitality of his own religion—Hinduism. The attempt of Geeta is, therefore, to convert the Hindus to Hinduism. A missionary cannot bring about this conversion successfully unless the spirit of our scriptures is explained to the common folk in their own language. Vedanta is to be explained in his own language. To Arjuna the example given here is the most striking. For, his entire life had been a series of tragedies which he had to suffer because of his elder brother's irresistible weakness to play the dice, and Duryodhana's consummate deception practised in the game, through the help of his uncle, Sakuni. No other example would have delivered the goods to Arjuna as efficiently as this one.

To the modern students this may not strike as very effective, since dice is not a game very popular with us now. But the substitute* is very easily recognised.

“*Splendour in the splendid am I*”—At the same time, a seeker, who is ready to make use of this portion for meditation, as it should be, will easily understand that the *Sastra* has said almost nothing. The splendour in the splendid has not the qualities of object in which it shines out. The splendour is itself has none of the qualities even, it is merely an experience. To facilitate that experience the mind might have borrowed the light, magnitude and the glory of the vision, but the total splendour in itself has nothing to do with the ingredients or constituents that

“* Of all the card games I am the cut-throat, of all the gamblings I am the cross-word” are examples which will speak to us eloquently.

together work up the experience of the splendours in our bosom. Is short, as Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa had once said, "Truth, no doubt, is Light, but it is light without its properties".

"I am victory ; I am effort ; I am the goodness in the good"—As explained above, here also it is these qualities nay, the experience lived in the presence of these qualities that gives us an occasion to live the Self. These qualities connote a certain mental condition created by the very special type of its thought-vibrations. When they are for a long period sustained, that bosom becomes quiet and still, wherein the reflected glory of Awareness becomes almost as glorious as the Reality and, therefore, as we said earlier, here too, by a transferred epithet the very qualities are declared as the Self.

We should not forget that these fifty-four items of analogy given in this chapter to indicate "the One in the many" are all meant to be meditated upon by all sincere seekers. This is not an objective narration, and, as such no true student of the Geeta can ever expect his education complete before he understands the word-meaning of these stanzas.

Still, if you need elaboration, Arjuna, you may listen :

वृष्णीनांवासुदेवोस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः ।

मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥ ३७ ॥

37. *vr̥ṣṇinam vasudevo smi
pandavanam dhananjayah
muninam apy aham vyasah
kavinam usana kavih*

वृष्णीनाम् - Among the Vrishnis, वासुदेवः - Vasudeva, अस्मि - (I) am, पाण्डवानाम् - among the Pandavas, धनंजयः - Dhananjaya, मुनीनाम् - among the Munis, अपि - also, अहम् - I, व्यासः - Vyasa, कवीनाम् - among poets, उशाना - Ushana, कविः - the seer.

37 Among the Vrishnis I am Vasudeva ; among the Pandavas, (I am) Dhananjaya ; also among the Munis I am Vyasa ; and among the poets I am Ushana, the great Seer.

“ *Of the Vrishnees, I am Vasudeva* ”—Among the Yadavas, the ancestor Yadu, had a son Vrishni. All the descendants of Vrishni together constitute the tribe called the Vrishnies. In this tribe was born Vasudeva as the great-great-grand-son of Vrishini. Vasudeva married Devaki, the sister of the Matura-tyrant, Kamsa, and to her was born Krishna. As the Son of Va(a)sudeva, the lord is called ‘ Vasudeva ’.

Of the Pandavas, I am Dhananjaya—Just as Krishna was the mighty one that had given to both the *Yadava-kula* and the *Vrishni-clan*, their glorious existence in the memory of man, among the Pandavas, He again was the soul-giving factor, but for whom, the five brothers would have achieved perhaps nothing. The term *Dhananjaya* has a direct meaning as ‘ the winner of wealth ’. Generally, this term is considered as a title of Arjuna, and, therefore, this portion is usually translated as “ *I am Arjuna, among the Pandavas* ”.

No doubt this interpretation might be the meaning in which Arjuna himself understood the phrase. It has its

own complimentary value, and in the technique of teaching, required doses of intelligent compliments paid to the student, is a necessary treatment wherein their enthusiasm is revived and they become all the more receptive for the discussion that is yet to follow. But, from the historical point of view the direct meaning is quite satisfactory. But for Krishna, the Mahabharata reveals very clearly that the Pandavas of themselves would have never reached to enjoy any prosperity. We may say that Krishna defeated the Duryodhanas and the Pandavas enjoyed the victory.

Of all the Saints I am Vyasa—This is not an unfair passage of self-advertisement thrown in by Vyasa himself, the author of the Geeta. This is not the cry of “Rustom” for self-encouragement. On the other hand, Vyasa was a pen-name which came to symbolise a new style of literature that was discovered and introduced into the realm of philosophical and religious writings in that age. The style was revolutionary inasmuch as till then, philosophical literature, as represented by the Upanishads, was in the form of *mantras*—“thoughts crystallised into small language capsules”. With the Purana a new style was initiated and developed, where elaboration was the motive and repeated over-emphasis of the fundamentals was the general technique. This was innovated by Krishna Dwaipayana under a suggestive pen-name, explaining in itself his own literary art of elaboration,* Vyasa.

Thus “*of all the Munis, I am Vyasa*” should suggest that of all the men of reflection, the Lord is He who is behind the stupendous work that stands to-day under the title ‘Puranas’.

* Vyasanath Vyasah.

Of the Seers, I am Usanas—Nowhere do we find any mention of this Seer in the available popular books. But Anandagiri somehow identifies Usanas with Sukra, but he too does not explain how he identifies these two together. The Planet Venus, also called Sukra, was the son of Bhrigu and the preceptor of the Daityas. Sukra is called as Kavi in the R̥g Veda.

In the Upanishads, *Kavi* means a Seer of the Vedic mantras. Men of inspiration roaring their experiences, with their ego-centric awareness lost for itself, were called *Kavis*, which later on deteriorated to mean writers of poetry who too at the sight of the spectacular universe got themselves lifted from themselves and seemed to enter into a realm of their own brilliant emotions, from the caves of which they sang their harmonious rhythm of poetic cadence. Here, however, it is used in the original meaning as a Seer.

Further :

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।

मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥ ३८ ॥

38. *dando damayataṃ smi*
nitir aṣmi jigisatam
maunam cai va smi guhyanam
jananam janavatam aham

दण्डः - The sceptre, दमयताम् - among punishers, अस्मि - (I) am, नीतिः - statesmanship, अस्मि (I) am, जिगीषताम् - among those who seek victory, मौनम् - silence, च - and, एव - also,

अस्मि - (I) am, गुह्यानाम् - among secrets, ज्ञानम् - the knowledge, ज्ञानवताम् - among the knowers, अहम् - I.

38 Among punishers I am the Sceptre ; among those who seek victory I am Statesmanship ; and also among secrets, I am Silence ; the Knowledge among knowers am I.

Of the Chastisers I am the Sceptre—The ruler and the ruled must be the relationship in all organisations like the State, if they must progressively push ahead the standards of living in the various community. The Law-giver must also see that he insists the laws and governs them. In this function of the Government, the Governor will, of necessity, become the punisher of the unsocial members of the community, who come to disobey the existing laws in that community. The ruled in their loyalty and reverence to the existing laws, generally, succumb to the punishments meted out to them by their rulers. But in fact, who really gives the power to the King or the President to punish the misbehaving individuals ? After all, in modern states, the individuals have no right to take the law into their own hands.

To the King, the symbol of his power to punish is the sceptre. To the President, in a Democratic Institution, the sanction to punish, the Chair, is given to him by the popular will. In the police-man on the corner of the street, the power to arrest is attached with his uniform. A King, devoid of his sceptre ; a President, who has been thrown out ; or a dismissed police-man, who has not the uniforms—none of them has any longer the powers to chastise the wicked. Naturally, therefore, “*Of all those who punish*”, the Lord says, “*I am the sceptre*” Without the symbol of the social sanction to do so, no individual in the

community has any right over the others. After all, be he a King or a President, be he a policeman or a judge, all of them are in themselves only members of the community, but they play the part of guarding the security of the community, because of the special privileges attached to them due to the status of their office.

Of conquerers, I am the State-Craft—Mere physical conquest is no victory at all, is the repeated declaration of all chapters in any history text-book. No Nation, community, society or individuals can, in fact, be considered as having conquered merely because of the force that has smothered them, or because of the might that is standing guard over them. A conquest of a community can be complete only when the conqueror has, through intelligent administrative policies, brought the conquered to amalgamate their culture and thought-pattern of the very conqueror. If the conquerors are not capable of thus converting the conquered, or getting themselves converted to the cultural values of the conquered, the conquest is never complete. This is an open secret to every student of history. After the military conquest, through statesmanship alone can the real baptism come, and this alone can bring the conquered permanently under the will of the conqueror.

Of things Secret, I am Silence—Secrecy is maintained in and nourished with silence. When a secret is ventilated in open discussions, it is no more a secret. Thus the very essence of secret lies in silence. So too, it may be noted that the Knowledge of the Self is described in our text-books as “the secret of the secrets”, because it is not generally known. This great secret is also experienced, and the divine experience is maintained and enjoyed, sustained and nourished, fed and grown, only upon the deep inner-silence.

Of all secret things, indeed, the Lord is the deep and unbroken Silence.

The Knowledge of the Knowers am I—The wisdom of the wise is not the wise themselves, and yet, it is not anything different from them. The Self is not the body, and yet, we cannot say that the body is anything different from the Self which is All-pervading. The envelopments of matter and their worlds of experiences are all the aura of glory that shines out around the Self. The knowledge in the knower or the wisdom in the wise, are the expressions of a Glory Divine, through the individuals, because of a certain pattern maintained among the inner personalities in them.

Summing up all that He had said so far in a beautiful peroration the Lord says :

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।

नतदस्ति विना यस्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥ ३९ ॥

39. *yac ca pi sarvabhutanam
bijam tad aham arjuna
na tad asti vina yat sayan
maya bhutam caracaram*

यत् - Which, च - and, अपि - also,
सर्वभूतानाम् - among all beings, बीजम् - seed,
तत् - that, अहम् - I, अर्जुन - O Arjuna, न - not,
तत् - that, अस्ति - is, विना - without, यत् - which,
स्यात् - may be, मया - by Me, भूतम् - being,
चराचरम् - moving or unmoving.

39. And whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that also am I, O Arjuna ; there is no being, whether moving or unmoving that can exist without Me.

That which is the Seed of all, that am I—In all the above descriptive phrases, indicating through analogies the nature, place and function of the Self in the scheme of the perceptible worlds of forms, thoughts and ideas, it was constantly suggested that the Self is the source for all creation. In order to hammer this idea into the dull-witted lest any student of Geeta might overlook and ignore this wonderful idea which is the essence of all Knowledge spiritual, Vyasa, again and again, makes Krishna repeat this essential truth, in a hundred different suggestive expressions.

The analogy of the seed and the tree is an inexhaustible theme for the meditators to contemplate upon. The rudimentary shoot and root are packed up in the tiny seed, as the plumule and the radicle, between lobes of stored-up food called the cotyledons. Under favourable conditions, the dormant life-content in the seed can manifest itself, and ere long the germinated seed can grow out into inconceivable heights, which may thereafter look as though they have no relationship with the very seed from which it arose. Viewing only the finite world of plurality, to one who is mourning under the sledge-hammer of change and constant death, the Samsar may not show as having anything Divine, Infinite or Blissful, as the Source from which it had come.

Again, the Supreme identifying with the individual mind and intellect, is the limited ego (*Jiva*). We had already found that the same Self functioning through the total-mind-and-intellect is the manifestation of the Omniscient and the Omnipotent God-Principle (*Ishwara*)*.

* “*Samashti Karana Sarirabhimani Ishwara*”—Read Swamiji’s Discourses on Mandokya and Karika, especially the Upanishad portion.

The 'seed condition of the Universe' is equivalent to the dormant condition of the tree before its manifestation among the two lobes of the dycotyledonous seed. Under favourable conditions, of course, the primary shoot and root-systems will emerge out, one ascending towards the sky and the other burrowing down into the depths. The entire Universe of names and forms in their condition of dormancy remaining in seed form is the "state of *Pralaya*", conceived of and accepted in our Upanishads. This cosmic dissolution becomes more intelligible to us when we notice it happening in ourselves. In the state-of-sleep, our individual temperaments, character, capabilities, education, culture, decency, etiquette etc., are all lying in a condition of dormancy; in short, our personality-peculiarities remain in a seed-condition in our own sleep. When these *Vasanas*, after an interval of poise, get impatient to express themselves, then they emerge out, and if the conditions are favourable, each of them comes to its full manifestation.

The rest of the total mind-and-intellect, and therefore, all the *Vasanas* in all of us in their condition of rest, would be the Total-*pralaya*, and at that time the whole Universe merges back to become the seed. This is an illuminating example for the poetic way of expression in all our ancient seers. This pregnant condition of the potential energy, which after a time, under suitable circumstances, will emerge out to express itself, is termed by the brilliant seers of Upanishads as the State of *Hiranyagarbha*. To translate this marvellous phrase as the "Golden egg" is one of the unconscious blasphemies that the Western translators have done to disfigure the beauty of our scriptures. "The womb of all things and beings", is all that is indicated by the term, *Hiranyagarbha*.

The Lord is here identifying himself with the total Causal bodies of the world, meaning the total *Vasanas* in all the creatures, and, therefore, as *Ishwara* he declares that the Self is the One great Seed from which the Tree of Samsar has emerged out, and will, in future, emerge out for an infinite number of times.

By this statement that “*I am the Seed of the Universe*” students of Geeta might during their reflection come to a wrong conclusion altogether, inasmuch as in the outer world the seed dies itself to become the tree. Similarly, the Lord while creating the World, might have got Himself destroyed ! To sponge out this misconception, Krishna says here, “*None can exist without Me, neither the moving nor the unmoving*”.

Not only that the Lord is the Seed of the Universe, but even after its germination and growth, the ‘tree’ is sustained, again by the Self. The Ocean is the ‘seed’ no doubt, of all the weeds of waves that crop up on the pasture land of the sea’s surface. And yet, when all waves germinate, as it were, and grow up, at least some of them, to become mountainous in size, they cannot stand apart from the source from which they arose. Where there is no ocean, no wave can stand, and wherever there are waves they are all sustaining themselves upon the grace of the Ocean.

The cosmos rises up from the Principle of Ignorance that seemingly veils the Truth. This *Avidya* also exists in existence, drawing its potencies, however delusory they may be, from the total Source of all projections. This Ignorance of the Self we know, is the ‘seed’ from which all the experienced worlds of the Universe have risen up. If the Awareness in us, Absolute and Eternal, were not to ‘illumine’ the very ignorance for us, the ignorance-produced sighs and sorrows,

and the perceptions of the plurality will not be at all available for us.

Thus, just as water is the cause for starting the germination in the 'seed', and again, it is water alone that can nourish and sustain the tree, even after the tree has expanded itself to its inconceivable dimensions, so too, the Divine Self, which by its magic-touch thrills the Seed of Samsar to germinate and thrive, is itself the nourisher and the sustainer of its dimensions at all times.

When we are told that ten sample pieces of ornaments have all emerged out from one mass of gold, and when this statement is reinforced by a pertinent codicil that without gold none of these sample pieces can ever exist itself even for a moment, it becomes evidently clear that all of them are nothing but gold. Drawing a parallel, here we are told that the Lord is the very seed from which the entire multiple Universe has risen up; and this partial statement of truth is complete when it is amended by the statement in the second line that, "*None can exist without Me*". Lord Cotton can say, "all the samples of cloth that are manufactured and used in the world have come from Me", then it will be only meet if, Lord Cotton would complete His statement by saying, "No sample of cloth can ever exist without Me, the Cotton-Essence".

Drawing together the various lines of arguments made so far, Krishna now winds up this section of his discourse, in the following three stanzas :

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।

एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ ४० ॥

40. *na nto sti mama divyanam
vibhutinam paramtapa
esa tu dresatah prokto
vibhuter vistaro maya*

न - Not, अन्तः - end, अस्ति - is, मम - My, दिव्यानाम् - of divine, विभूतीनाम् - glories, परन्तप - O Parantapa, एष - this, तु - indeed, उद्देशतः - brief statement, प्रोक्तः - has been stated, विभूतेः - of glory, विस्तरः - particulars, मया - Me.

40, There is no end to My Divine Glories, O Parantapa ; but, this is but a brief statement by Me of the particulars of My Divine Glories.

There is no end to My Glories—These enumerations of the transcendental glories of the Eternal, were actually started in this Chapter, in a cry of intelligent despair, at the magnitude of the things and the frailty of the language to express them all. And yet, out of sheer love for the disciple the Eternal Master in Krishna took up the job in hand and tried to make the best out of a bad job. No pot-maker can ever indicate, pot to pot in all the existing pots the mud-essence, to an enquirer, and feel himself congratulated in the end that he has exhausted all the pots in the Universe that were, are, and shall ever be. It will be a foolish vanity even to hope to succeed in such a hopeless endeavour. And in fact it is not necessary also. If in ten or twenty specimens, the Knower-of-the essence, indicates to the seeker the essential

stuff in each, separate from their names and forms and other attributes, it should be possible for the seeker to recognise the Essence, when he meets the next specimen, all for himself.

Here, in the Chapter the Lord gave to Arjuna and over his shoulders to the entire generation of the Geeta-students that would ever come to listen to Him in the world, the above described fifty-four instances, wherein the play of the Infinite through the apparent veils of matter, had been shown. By now, any student who had sufficiently meditated upon those instances, must have educated his mind fully to discover for himself the One Infinite peeping, through the trellis of the finite multiplicity

In sheer despair at not being able to exhaust the infinite varieties in the pluralistic phenomenal world, Krishna cries that “there is no end to the ‘Rays’ of My glory when I, resplendent in My Absolute Perfection, shine out in My Self-effulgence”.

“If this knowledge was already with the Lord, why did He, as a spiritual teacher bluff His disciples all along in a futile attempt to reveal Himself through the finite forms? Why this Divine Deception? Why disappoint the students after straining them so long? Is this the general trait of all the religious teachers, prophets, seers and masters? Then certainly religion is a greater conspiracy than the political adventurers who come now and then into the political arena and seduce the confidence of the public to rape and loot a nation!”.—These are some of the modern doubts that I have come across in my daily correspondence.

The answer to this accusation against the technique of Religion is that—“there is no other way”. A medical college-student is to be asked to do a series of operations

upon a dead body that had become cold at the last week-end. This is no bluff; although, it is sure that, however successful the operation may be, the patient will not start again his life. Such training on dumb objects are necessary to give the student the required training, before he starts his independent activities in the profession. Similarly, here too, the Lord provides Arjuna with some specific examples in order to teach him the Art of seeing the Unseen through the seen.

This intention in his heart is clear in his own confession in the second line “ *But, by brief examples only have I declared My Divine glory* ”. The Lord has not exhausted Himself; but He gives some examples to educate the mind of His listeners and those who have ardently meditated upon these examples will learn to recognise the Infinite in all its undecaying resplendency enthroned in the bosom of every finite form.

In short :

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशंसंभवम् ॥ ४१ ॥

41. *yad-yad vibhutimat sattvam
srīmad urjitam eva va
tat-tad eva vagaccha tvam
mama tejomsasambhavam*

यद्यत् – Whatever, विभूतिमत् – glories, सत्त्वम् – being, श्रीमत् – prosperous, ऊर्जितम् – powerful, एव – also, वा – or, तत्तत् – that, एव – only, अवगच्छ – know, त्वम् – you, मम – My, तजोशसं-भवम् – a manifestation of a part of My splendour.

41. Whatever that is glorious, prosperous or powerful in any being, that know you to be a manifestation of a part of My splendour.

The above examples have made a frail attempt to indicate the glories of the Lord but in no sense can those descriptions be considered as having defined the Truth. However, it has given us an idea that the Divine, the Imperishable, can be detected in the realm of the undivine, the perishable, if we look for it with discriminative judgement. From the above examples it becomes evidently clear that the Lord is present in all names and forms revealing himself as the glorious or the great on the mighty aspect in all things and beings.

Krishna here directly summarises and provides Arjuna with an acid test in knowing what exactly constitutes the Divine Presence in the world of plurality. Whatever that is great or glorious or mighty is nothing but the expression of a ray of Lord's own Infinite Splendour. This is no, doubt, a wonderful summary of the above mentioned fifty-four assorted items. In each one of those examples there is a clear-cut instance of indicating the Lord as either the Great one in the whole species, or the noblest and the most glorious thing or happening, or as the most mighty among the powerful.

This indication was given expressly to facilitate Arjuna's recognition of the immanent glory of the Lord in the things of the world. It can equally be useful for us the students of Geeta, in seeking and perceiving the play of the Infinite among the finite and the changing rush of names and forms.

In the end :

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेत तवार्जुन ।

विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ ४२ ॥

42. *athava bahuna tena*
kim jnatena tava rjuna
vistabhya ham idam hrtsnam
ekamsena sthito jagat

अथवा - Or बहुना - (by) many, एतेन - (by) this, किम् - what, ज्ञातेन - know to, तव - of thee, अर्जुन - O Arjuna, विष्टभ्य - supporting, अहम् - I, इदम् - this, कृत्स्नम् - all, एकांशेन - by one part, स्थितः - exist, जगत् - the world.

42. But, of what avail to thee is the knowledge of all these details, O Arjuna? I exist, supporting this whole world by one part of Myself.

Under an inspired urge of friendliness and love, though Krishna in all haste promised that he would explain "His expression in the individual" (*Yoga*) apart from the description of "His glory as the Cosmic-man" (*Vibhuti*), when he tried to indicate Himself, object by object, He Himself realised the impossibility of exhausting the treatment. Infinite upon infinite mounts the total number of things and beings in the Universe and it is never possible to exhaust them one by one. With a cry of despair, and yet in an attitude of extreme love for his disciple, Lord Krishna brilliantly summarises this chapter in this last stanza.

"*Of what avails thee to know all these diversities*"—In fact it is useless to explain the presence of the Infinite in every finite form. It is impossible for a pot-maker to show the mud in all the existing pots in the world ; nor can any

one indicate the ocean in every wave in the sea. All that we can do is to explain to the student the art of recognising the mud aspect in a few pots so that the student can independently come to recognise mud in all the existing pots. It is never possible for a mathematics teacher to exhaust all examples, but the student is taught the art of solving the problem through a limited number of problems and thereafter the student, all for himself gains a capacity to solve any similar problem, independently.

“*I with one part of myself have established this whole Universe*”—*Jagat* rendered as ‘the whole Universe’ is a very unhappy translation inasmuch as ordinarily we will fail to understand the whole import of the term. Universe is a term which in our vocabulary indicates only the gross world of the Sun and the Planets, the Stars and the Earth with the perceivable things and beings in them. But the term *Jagat* in Sanskrit implies much more than this gross term ‘Universe’ in English.

In philosophical usage the term *Jagat* means all fields of experience which man is capable of: as a physical body, as a psychological being and as an intellectual entity. This would mean that the word *Jagat* is the sum-total of the world perceived by my senses plus the world of my emotions and sentiments plus the world of my ideas and ideologies. The entire field that is comprehended by the sense organs, the mind and the intellect, is to be understood as *Jagat*. In short, this term conveniently embraces in its meaning and import the entire “realm of objects”.

The declaration here in the last line, therefore, means that the total world of objects is supported, tendered and nourished by a quarter of—meaning, a portion of—the Subject, the Self. Krishna as the Self, naturally declares here that the whole *Jagat* is supported by a portion of his

glory. This statement has got yet another philosophical implication inasmuch as it declares that there is in Truth vast portions which are uncontaminated by the disturbances which we call as the *Jagat*. No doubt, in the homogenous Truth there cannot be separated portions of different features; however, this is a kindly method of indicating a transcendental idea with terrestrial words of a finite language.

हरिः ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां

योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुन संवादे विभूतियोगो

नाम दशमोऽध्यायः ॥ १० ॥

Harih Om Tat Sat Ity Srimad Bhagawadgitasooapanishatsu

Brhamavidyayam Yogasastre Sri Krishnarjuna

Samvade Vibhutyogo nama

Dasamodhyayah

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavadgeeta, the Science of the Eternal, the Scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the Tenth Discourse entitled :

THE YOGA OF DIVINE GLORIES.

We have already explained the term 'Vibhuti' during our discussions in this chapter. This becomes a Yoga inasmuch as students, earnestly following the path, would try to attune their mental perception and intellectual comprehension to recognise the greatness or the glory or the might in things and situations, and recognise them, as a pencil of the divine ray, in themselves, emerging from the glorious effulgence of the Self to peep through the manifold finite embodiments.*

* For discussions of the Sankalpa Vakya, please refer the exhaustive descriptions given at the end of Chapters I & II.

SREEMAD BHAGAVAD GEETA

CHAPTER XI

INTRODUCTION

In the general scheme of development of the theme Lord Krishna had explained already his immanence in all the objects of the world (*Vibhuti*). This expansion of Himself in all objects and beings as a perceptible Divine Presence is exhaustively explained in the previous chapter entitled '*Vibhuti Yoga*'.

Studying this chapter, keeping in view this scheme of development in the Geeta, we detect here a perfectly modern and scientific method of investigation employed. An intellectual enquiry first of all seeks to gather enough data to support a theory, and, thereafter, it must be demanding an experimental demonstration of the same, without which the theory cannot be established. If in the previous chapter, therefore, Geeta has supplied us with enough data to prove the thesis that the Self is the substratum for the multiple world, in this chapter the attempt is to supply Arjuna with a practical demonstration that everything exists in the Self.

The declaration, that the mud is the essence of all pots, is established only when we prove, not only that all pots have mud in them, but, that the mud contains all pots of all shapes and dimensions always. To see the mud in every pot we have only to train our eyes to detect the mud separate from the pot-shapes, but to see all pots in the mud, no doubt, the observer needs a special 'eye'. He needs

sufficient sense of detachment and a scholarly amount of imagination without which it is impossible for him to detect the world-of-pots in any sample of mud.

Similarly, as it was described in the last Chapter, to see the Self peeping through the windows of finite objects is relatively an easy task ; but it is hard, indeed, for a mortal to cognise at once the entire Universe in One Reality, the Self. And yet, this is possible with the "eye" of knowledge which knows so well the art of discrimination, and which has so developed in itself a sufficient sense of detachment, that the observer can forget for the moment all his attachments and view on in a spirit of hushed expectancy and thrilled wonderment.

What exactly makes the things of the world exist separately from one another ? My physical structure is certainly separated from the form and substance of the book that I am reading, or the chair in which I sit, or the table that is in front of me. I am separated from all others and every-one of them is separate from everything else. Scientifically viewed the elements that constitute the physical girth of all things in the world are but the same. And yet, we do not feel the oneness, they being separated from each other to exist as individualised entities. What exactly is the factor that divides body from body, that separates object from object ?

On a careful analysis it will be quite clear to the thinker that it is the concept of space that divides the physical structures into independent island. That which separates me from you, or me from my book, is the intervening space. Within my forearm, from the elbow to the wrist, there is certainly a sense of oneness, because, there is no intervening space present within the homogeneity of its entire length,

while my fingers are separate, each being interleaved by space. In case the concept of space has been totally blotted out, it will be clear that all objects would immediately come together into a happy embrace, and would represent themselves as one congenial homogenous whole. And, in this mass of things there must be all the shapes and forms of all things of this world at one and the same place and time. This is the concept of the Cosmic Man: the vision of the world when viewed at by a mind in which the concept of time and space have been dried up! Though not totally.

Supposing a toy-maker makes hundreds of different forms of animals, birds and creatures, and stock them in an Almirah. Viewed through its glass pans, no doubt, the monkey-doll is different from the cow-doll and both of them are separate from the baby-doll. But suppose the doll-maker changes his mind and he decides to destroy the whole lot and to make out of the stuff some-thing more profitable. On the shelf of the Almirah, the same toys are separated from each other by the intervening space. Suppose the toymaker decides to destroy them all to squeeze them into one ball of wax. In this act the maker of dolls eliminated the spaces that were before between the dolls; and in thus bringing them together he would be creating a huge ball of wax on the surface of which we could see almost traces of all the dolls that were brought together. The tail of the monkey, the face of the cow, the smile of the child, the head of the dog etc.

Similarly, if Krishna could dry up "the concept of space" in the mind of Arjuna, the Prince could see the whole Universe in his own palm. However, here we find that Arjuna's mind was given enough freedom to move about within the space-limit of Krishna's divine structure. Natu-

rally, Dhananjaya sees in the Krishna-form the entire Universe compressed and packed.

This concept of the Cosmic Man and the actual vision of it in the Geeta satisfies the demand for demonstration of any age of intellectual self-assertion. Having seen the form, Arjuna gets completely converted both in his faith and in his understanding.

In this chapter we find how the exquisite dramatist in Vyasa has milked the Sanskrit language dry to feed the beauty of his literary master-piece. Apart from the chosen words and the mellifluous phrases, even metrical strategy is being employed here to heighten the dramatic situation and to paint clearly the emotions of wonderment, amazement, fear, reverence, devotion etc., in Arjuna. Altogether in the dignity of the concept, in the beauty of its diction, in the artistry of its depiction, and in its inner stream of drama, this Chapter has been rightly upheld by all as one of the highest philosophical poems in the world's treasure-house of Sacred books.

ॐ श्रीपरमात्मने नमः

॥ अथैकादशोऽध्यायः ॥

अर्जुन उवाच

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।

यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोयं विगतो मम ॥ १ ॥

Arjuna Uvaca

1. *madanugrahaya paramam
guhvam adhyatmasamjñitam
yat tvayo ktam vacas tena
moho yam vigato mama*

मदनुग्रहाय - Out of compassion towards me,
परमम् - the highest, गुह्यम् - the secret, अध्यात्म-
संज्ञितम् - Adhyatma-named, यत् - which, त्वया -
by you, उक्तम् - spoken, वचः - word, तेन - by
that, मोहः delusion, अयम् - this, विगतः - gone,
मम - my.

Arjuna Said

1. By this word of the highest secret concerning the
Self, which you have spoken out of compassion
towards me, my delusion is gone.

In the opening stanza of this chapter Arjuna confesses his complete satisfaction at the details regarding the glories of the Lord, which the previous chapter has provided him with. Arjuna also understood that so much of labour was taken by Krishna only to bless his disciple and bring him out of his delusion. To realise the unity in the diversity is to get inoculation against the sorrows of plurality. The deft pen of Vyasa beautifully registers the effectiveness of the last chapter upon a sincere student when he makes Arjuna confess “ *this my delusion is gone* ”.

Removal of a delusion or a misunderstanding is not in itself the acquisition of a knowledge of the Real. Removal of delusion is one aspect of the process of knowing the Truth. Arjuna must be rightly feeling that his delusion—his firm faith in the separateness of names and forms—can no longer hold its grounds when his intellect has been thus educated to look forward to and detect the presence of the Divine in the very world of his perceptions. But at the same time, he has not gained any visible experience of the Unity in the diversity; he has any personal experience of the oneness of things and beings, although theoretically at least, his intellect has come to accept this inherent oneness.

The Pandava Prince realised that Krishna has so elaborately explained the theme in the previous chapter only “out of compassion towards me” (*Madanugrahaya*). This reminds us of Krishna using almost the same term when He explains how He, abiding in the hearts of his devotees destroys all their inner darkness born out of ignorance.*

Out of compassion for Arjuna, what were the supremely profound words that were given out by the Lord? Listen :

* Refer Chapter X. II.

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।

त्वत्त कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

2. *bhavapyayau hi bhutanam*
srutau vistaraso maya
tvattah kamalapattraksa
mahatmyam api ca vyayam

भवाप्ययौ - the origin and dissolution, हि - indeed, भूतानाम् - of beings, श्रुतौ - have been heard, विस्तरशः - in detail, मया - by me, त्वत्तः - from you, कमलपत्राक्ष - O Lotus eyed, माहात्म्यम् - greatness, अपि - also, च - and, अव्ययम् - inexhaustible.

2. The origin and destruction of beings verily, have been heard by me in detail from you, O Lotus-eyed, and also your inexhaustible greatness.

It is natural, in a discussion between a teacher and the taught that at the end of a difficult lesson the student on approaching the teacher with his doubts he should first of all prove to his teacher that he has sufficiently understood the theme of discussion so far given by his teacher. This assures to the student the right to ask and clear his doubts with the teacher. Following this traditional method Arjuna is trying to show Krishna that he has completely understood the main theme of the last chapter. He has listened to Krishna and understood the “*Origin and dissolution of Beings, and the greatness and the inexhaustible glory of the Lord*”.

And yet a doubt remains somewhere in the dark corners of his heart, which can be illumined only when his intellect can

get the confirmation of a confident knowledge arising out of an actually observed demonstration. The stanza is preparing for such a demand. When a student, who has proved himself to have understood the logic of discussion so far given, and asks a legitimate question or enquires after the remedy for a possible obstacle, a true teacher's duty it is to help him out of his troubles by all possible means. We shall observe here in this chapter that the great *Yogeswara* out of sheer kindness even condescends to show Arjuna the form of the Cosmic Man because the disciple has demanded to *see* it.

The demand of the desciple is described in the following stanza :

ऐवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ ३ ॥

3. *evam etad yatha ttha tvam
atmanam paramesvara
drastum icchami te rupam
aisvaram purusottama*

एवम् - Thus, एतत् - this, यथा - as, आत्थ -
hast declared, त्वम् - thou, आत्मानम् - yourself,
परमेश्वर - O Supreme Lord, द्रष्टुम् - to see,
इच्छामि - (I) desire, ते - your, रूपम् - form,
ऐश्वरम् - sovereign, पुरुषोत्तम - O Purusha Supreme.

3. (Now) O Supreme Lord ! as you have thus described yourself, in that way, O Purushottama (Purusha Supreme) ! I wish to see (actually) your Form Divine.

Indicating by a familiar idiom in Sanskrit “ So it be ”, (*Evametot*), Arjuna accepts the technical thesis that had been declared by the Lord Intellectually it has been satisfactorily proved that the Lord is immanent in all names and forms Still the intellect awaits for the baptism of a demonstration. Therefore Arjuna says, “ *I desire to see thy Ishwara form* ”. He is an *Ishwara* who in himself expresses omnipotence, infinite wisdom, strength, virtue and splendour : these are the six qualities that are described in our *sastras* as forming the characteristic features of the God-Principle.

This was the occasion which decided Krishna to show to Arjuna that not only the Lord is immanent in all forms, but He is also the vehicle or receptacle in which all names and forms have their existence and play.

Though with the enthusiasm of a fanatic believer in intellectualism Arjuna demanded the demonstration, immediately he realises that his audacity has, perhaps, crossed the frontiers of decency.

He is trying to smoothen out his words in the following stanza :

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ ४ ॥

4. *manyase yadi tac chakyam*
maya drastum iti prabho
yogesvara tato me tvam
darsaya tmanam avyayam

मन्यसे - You think, यदि - if, तत् - that,
 शक्यम् - possible, मया - by me, द्रष्टुम् - to see,

इति - thus, प्रभो - O Lord, योगेश्वर - O Lord of Yogis, ततः - then, मे - me, त्वम् - you, दर्शय - show, आत्मानम् - (your) self, अव्ययम् - Imperishable.

4. If you, O Lord, think it possible for me to see it, do you please then, O Lord of Yogis, show me your Imperishable Self-form.

The demand in the previous stanza has been again repeated here, honeyed with the flavours of a dignified humbleness and pure reverence. This is equivalent to the usage in our ordinary life in all our respectful appeals and humble petitions such phrases as: "If I may be permitted to say", "I will be much obliged if", "I have the honour to submit", "If I may have the leave to say so", etc. The Pandava Prince, as a result of a second thought, as it were, soothens his soldier-language, used in the previous stanza, and says, that the Lord's immutable Universal Form may be shown to him. "*If you think me capable of seeing It*".

The modesty and reverence shown here are not a faked emotion expressed for cheaply, fulfilling his desires. This is evident from the term he is using in addressing the Lord in the stanza. In the first line we find Krishna being addressed as "O' Lord" (*Prabho*), and in the following line He is again addressed as "the Lord of Yogas (*Yogeswara*)". These clearly indicate that Arjuna has come to feel that Krishna is not a mere mortal teacher capable of only giving some intellectual ventilations and spiritual discourses but that He is Himself Divine and a Master-of-Yogas, and therefore, he is capable of fulfilling the request, in case the

“ teacher ” in Krishna feels that the “ student ” in Arjuna will be benefitted by such a demonstration.

The humble request of the earnest student never falls on deaf ears if it is made to a true teacher .

श्रीभगवानुवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।

नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नाना वर्णा कृतीनिच ॥ ५ ॥

Sri Bhagavan Uvaca

5. *pasya me partha rupani
sataso tha sahasrasah
nanavidhani divyani
nanavarnakrtini ca*

पश्य - Behold, मे - my, पार्थ - O Partha,
रूपाणि - forms, शतशः - by hundreds, अथ - and,
सहस्रशः - by thousands, नानाविधानि - of different
sorts, दिव्यानि - Divine, नानावर्णकृतनी - of various
colours and shapes, च - and.

The Blessed Lord Said :

5. Behold, O Partha, forms of Me, by hundreds and thousands, of different sorts Divine, of various colours and shapes.

If gold is the essential stuff in all the ornaments, every ornament in the world must be in the total gold available. To see the gold in the ornaments is relatively easy, it being a physical perfection. But to detect the presence of all

ornaments of different shapes and colours in the total gold is comparatively difficult, inasmuch as it is the vision of the intellect.

Keeping this idea in the mind when you read the opening lines of the Lord's words it becomes very significant. "*Behold, by hundreds and thousands, My different forms celestial, varied in colours and shapes*". The Charioteer being what He was, it was not necessary for Him to change His form to that of the Cosmic Man, all that Arjuna had to do was to behold the form right in front of him. But unfortunately the instrument-of-perception was not tuned up for the object of his investigation and, therefore, Arjuna could not perceive that which was already in Krishna.

That which is lying beyond the focal length of a telescope cannot be viewed by the observer even though the object may be present in a line with the axis of the instrument. In order to bring the farther object within the span of vision the observer will have to make the required adjustments in the telescope. Similarly, here I do not believe that Krishna *transformed* Himself into His Cosmic Form, but He only helped Arjuna to gain the necessary inward adjustments so that he may perceive what was already there evidently in Krishna. Naturally, the Lord says, "*Behold*". The total world of perceivable things of all shapes and colours, are indicated in the enumeration made by the Lord in the stanza.

What are they?

पश्यादित्यान्वसून् रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।

बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥ ६ ॥

6. *pasya dityan vasun rudran
asvinau marutas tatha
bahuny adstrapurvani
pasya scaryani bharata*

पश्य – Behold, आदित्यान् – the Adityas, वसून् – the Vasus, रुद्रान् – the Rudras, अश्विनौ – the (two) Aswins, मरुतः – the Maruts, तथा – also, बहूनि – many, अदृष्टपूर्वाणि – never seen before, पश्य – see, आश्चर्याणि – wonders, भारत – O Bharata.

6. Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras the
(Two) Aswins, and also the Maruts ; behold
many wonders never seen before, O Bharata.

Enumerating the important items that are to be seen in Krishna's Cosmic Form, the Lord hints at the most important and striking factors. This is generally done when we try to briefly describe a crowd of people or things. Mention is made in all such occasions of the most important items or personalities—the few who represent the whole crowd.

With a note of despair ringing through his words the Lord concludes “*Behold many more such wonders as never seen before*”. The various items enumerated have all been already explained in the previous chapter*. Of them the only new term used here is the *Aswini Kumars*, the Horsemen Twins. It is not very clear in the literature as to what

* The Adityas and Maruts (X. 21) ; the Vasus and the Rudras (X. 23).

exactly is the identity of these twins. It is not very easy to decide what they represent. In some places they are described as the Dawn and the Dusk, and in other places there are sufficient evidences to give us the suspicion that they represent the Morning-Star and the Evening-Star. Any way they are Angels that reach to serve their devotees in times of utter need and despair.

By thus giving a comprehensive summary of the things to be expected in the Cosmic vision, Krishna has increased the intellectual curiosity of his disciple. Where exactly is he to look for these things? Listen :

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।

मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद्द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ ७ ॥

7. *ihai kasthan jagat krtsnam
pasya dya sacaracaram
mama dehe gudakesa
yac ca nyad drastum icchasi*

इह - In this, एकस्थम् - centred in one, जगत् - the universe, कृत्स्नम् - whole, पश्य - be hold, अद्य - now, सचराचरम् - with the moving and un-moving, मम - my, देहे - in body, गुडाकेश - O Gudakesha, यत् - that, च - and, अन्यत् - other, द्रष्टुम् - to see, इच्छसि - (thou) desirest.

7. Now behold, O Gudakesha, in this body, the whole universe centred in one—including the moving and the un-moving—and whatever else you desire to see.

The enthusiastic seeker's adventurous mind has been sufficiently educated so far to find in it an unending wealth of 'eagerness to know'. Sharpening thus the 'anxiety to know' in the student, his mind is again educated with sufficient details on what all he may expect in the Divine Vision that is to follow. Next, in this secret technique, it makes the student ardently converge all his attentions towards one given Form Divine. This is being achieved in this stanza. If we thus follow the unsaid technique, developed through the expressed words, we shall find that Vyasa has here revealed the entire Science of Love as adumbrated in the Cult of Bhakti or Devotion to the Supreme.

The entire Universe, constituted both of the moving and the unmoving—of the sentient and the insentient—is being shown by Krishna on his own physical structure as described by the effective intimate term "Here, concentrated" (*Ihaikastham*). And this term has been annotated in the same stanza as "In this My body" (*Mama dehe*). The entire Universe of gross forms, both movable and immovable, is to be compressed within the frame-work of Krishna's girth and height. As we explained earlier,* the concept of space has been sponged out of Arjuna's mind not completely, but leaving in him a total space-concept equivalent to Krishna's own mortal dimensions. With this mind when Arjuna looks out he must necessarily see framed in Krishna all at once the entire Universe compressed and miniaturized in all their multiple details intact.

Even though "the entire Universe, including both the moving and the unmoving," is a term sufficiently elastic that it could not leave anything outside its implications, Krishna

* Ibid Introduction.

again sharpens the enthusiasm of Arjuna by stating that the Pandava could see anything “*else that you desire to see*”. As a typical mortal Arjuna is preoccupied with his particular problem of life and his anxiety naturally grows to peep to the future and discover its solution rather than to realise the underlying oneness that embraces even the forms in the outer world-of-matter.

“*The One in the many*” has been described in the last chapter, and here we are about to see “*the many in the One*”:

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।

दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥ ८ ॥

8. *na tu mam sakyase drastum
anenai va svācaksusa
divyam dadami te caksuh
pasya me yogam aisvaram*

न - Not, तु - but, माम् - me, शक्यसे - you can, द्रष्टुम् - to see, अनेन - with this, एव - even, स्वचक्षुषा - with own eyes, दिव्यम् divine, ददामि - (I) give, ते - (to) you, चक्षुः - the eye, पश्य - behold, मे - my, योगम् - Yoga, ऐश्वरम् - Lordly.

8. But you are not able to behold Me with these your own eyes ; I give you the divine-eye ; behold My Lordly Yoga.

We have already explained how it is relatively easier to see the essential stuff as the core of individual names and forms, but the reverse of it—to discover the many in the one—is the work of a subtle intellect perceiving through right philosophical understanding. To *read* a poem, only

in alphabetical knowledge is necessary ; but to *understand* its subtler beauties and to classify it in a comparative study with other similar poems it needs a masterly mind that has been well soaked with the master-pieces in that branch of writing. Similarly, to *see* “*the one in the many*” is the work of a heart soaked with faith ; but to *perceive* “*the many in the one*”, we need, besides the heart, an educated intellect that has learnt to see itself the logic of the philosophers. This peculiar capacity of an educated intellect to see the extraordinary is the vision of the intellect gained when knowledge peeps out to perceive and to know.

This obvious fact is explained by the Lord in a simple inimitable style in the stanza under review. “*You cannot see Me with these eyes of yours ; I give thee the Vision Divine*”. There are very many critics who try to explain this Divine Eye through fantastic suppositions and ridiculous theories. Such commentators are certainly men not much educated in the style of the Hindu scriptures, the Upanishads. Expressly and tacitly all through the Upanishads it is repeatedly explained that the subtler cannot be brought within the scope and compass of the instruments-of-perception given to man. The external sense-organs can play themselves only in the outer world-of-objects. Even when we ordinarily “see an idea” it is not done with our outer pair of eyes. The intellectual comprehension is meant here by the term “seeing” and the capacity of the intellect to comprehend is the “Divine Eye” referred to in this stanza

This special vision is given to the Pandava Prince so that he may see “*My Supreme Yoga Power*” by which the whole Universe of multiplicity is being supported by the Lord’s own Form. Earlier this particular Yoga Power of the

Lord has been already described in two different places, almost in identical terms (Ibid Ch. VII-12 & IX-4.).

The scene shifts to the Palace of Dhritharashtra :

संजय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।

- दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ ९ ॥

Sanjaya Uvaca

9 *evam uktva tato rajan
mahayogesvaro harih
darsayam asa parthaya
paramam rupam aisvaram*

एवम् - Thus, उक्त्वा - having spoken, ततः - then, राजन् - O king, महायोगेश्वरः - the great Lord of Yoga, हरिः - Hari, दर्शयामास - showed, पार्थाय - to Partha, परमम् - Supreme, रूपम् - form, ऐश्वरम् - Lordly.

Sanjaya Said

9. Having thus spoken, O King, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari, showed to Partha His supreme form as Lord.

The versatile genius of Vyasa has never left anything that he has touched without raising it to the sublimest

heights of sheer perfection. Incomparable poetry, unapproachable prose-diction, chaste descriptions, artistic literary designs, original innovations both in thought and form—a brilliant philosopher, a consummate man of wisdom, a genius in worldly knowledge—now in the Palace, now in the battle field, now in Badrinath, now among the silent snowy peaks—strode the colossus, Sri Vyasa, as an embodiment of what is best in the Hindu tradition and in the Aryan culture. Such an all round genius has not yet been reported ever to have born, lived or achieved in the History of the Globe.

When such a mighty master takes up his pen to paint life in all its implications and indicate an answer to all the eternal problems of man, he cannot but use the medium of drama in his work. Though in Sanskrit “dharma”, as is now known to us, is of a much later development, the dramatic interest has been fully and exhaustively exploited by the Vyasa-pen all through his works. A beautiful example of his dexterity as a dramatist is amply evident in this chapter, where the three personalities—Krihsna, Arjuna and Sanjaya—together among themselves swing their audience of readers between the noisy battle-field of *Kuruksheetra* and the chambers of Dhritarashtra’s Palace, where a hushed silence of impending tragedy thickly hung.

When Lord Krishna has thus given Arjuna a hint as to what he should expect and where he will gain the vision of the Cosmic Man etc., Vyasa introduces a small section in which Sanjaya reports to Dhritarashtra, the blind royal father of the wicked Duryodhana-brothers.

The literary purpose served by this stanza is only to show to the readers that Krishna, according to his promise, had actually revealed his Cosmic Form to Arjuna. But

along with that the deft mastery of the ancient writer of Mahabharata tries to paint for us the mental character and the inward sympathies of Sanjaya. We have already described earlier that Sanjaya is "Our own Special Correspondent". His sympathies are clearly with the Pandavas, the friends of the Lord. This tendency in Sanjaya is unquestionably revealed when he addresses his own master merely as "O' King" (*Rajan*) while he uses the terms "the Great Lord of Yoga" (*Mahayogeswara*), and "The one who maintains the champions of Truth by destroying the powers of falsehood" (*Hari*), to indicate Lord Krishna. The implied suggestions of these words are equivalent to a bloodless murder of the blind old King!

With Sanjaya's words the crowd of listeners and students of Geeta are shifted from the field of the battle to the Palace of the battle-monger. This is perhaps necessary to remind the readers that the philosophy of the Geeta has an intimate practical application to life. Sanjaya informs Dhritarashtra that the Great Lord of Yoga showed to Arjuna his Supreme *Aishwara*-Form. Sanjaya entertains a vague hope that the blind King will, atleast on hearing that the Lord of the Universe is on the side of his nephews, foresee the sure defeat of his sons, and in his discrimination will cry halt to the impending disastrous wars. It is very evident in the Mahabharata that the one solitary individual who could have called off the war even at that moment was the born-blind Dhritarashtra.

In a rough outline Sanjaya describes the list of things that were visible within the frame work of the Divine Charioteer :

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।

अनेकदिव्याभरणदिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १० ॥

10. *anekavaktranayanam*
anekatbhutadarsanam
anekadivyaabharanam
divyanekodyatayudham

अनेकवक्त्रनयनम् - With numerous mouths and eyes, अनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् - with numerous wonderful sights, अनेकदिव्याभरणम् - with numerous divine ornaments, दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् - with numerous divine weapons uplifted.

10. With numerous mouths and eyes, with numerous wonderful sights, with numerous divine ornaments, with numerous divine weapons uplifted (such a form He showed).

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।

सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ ११ ॥

11. *divyamalayambaradharam*
divyagandhanulepanam
sarvascaryamayam devam
anantam visvatomukham

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरम् - Wearing Divine garlands (necklaces) and apparel, दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् - anointed with Divine unguents, सर्वाश्चर्यमयम् - the all-wonderful, देवम् - resplendent, अनन्तम् - endless, विश्वतोमुखम् - with faces on all sides.

11. Wearing divine garlands (necklaces) and apparel, anointed with divine unguents, the All-wonderful, resplendent, endless, facing all sides.

A painter at his easle when trying to express his artistic ideas through the medium of colour, he invariably to begin with, outlines his theme roughly on the canvas. Later on, inch by inch he throws in more and more of the details to make the canvas sing the song of his message. Similarly here, in the word-picture of the literary artist, Vyasa, this stanza containing Sanjaya's words represents the rough outline of the Universal Form of the Lord.

“ Many many mouths and eyes ”—“ Numerous wonderful sights ”—“ of endless divine ornaments ”—“ with an artillery of celestial weapons uplifted ”— all these phrases represent the so many moulds into which when the poetry of Vyasa is poured, Krishna the Universal Soul comes out carved in His Cosmic Form.

The vision that Sanjaya looks on is no vision for any mortal intellect to live comfortably. An ordinary man must feel dazed with wonderment and fear at the august presence of this mighty vision. The total Cosmos is no easy subject-matter for the mind to conceive or for the intellect to comprehend, and, therefore, when it comes as it does, in the Geeta, in the stark realism of the vision, Sanjaya stammers into these phrases.

*“ Divine His garlands and robes ”—“ Divine the perfume of his anointment ”—“ all marvellous, the Lord, boundless and facing every side ”—*these represent the remaining strokes which, when added to the pervious set of lines, the picture of the Cosmic Man stands roughly chalked out full in its outline.

Continuing his language of dots and dashes Sanjaya describes :

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपत्तुथिता ।

यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ १२ ॥

12. *divi suryasahasrasya
bhaved yugapad utthita
yadi bhah sadrsi sa svad
bhasas tasya mahatmanah*

दिवी - In the sky, सूर्यसहस्रस्य - of a thousand
suns, भवेत् - were, युगपत् - at once (simulta-
neously), उत्थिता - arisen, यदि - if, भाः -
splendour, सदृशी - like, सा - that, स्यात् -
would be, भासः - splendour, तस्य - of that,
महात्मनः - of the mighty Being (great soul)

12. If the Splendour of thousand suns were to blaze
out at once (simultaneously) in the sky, that
would be like the splendour of that Mighty
Being (great soul).

After giving this hasty sketch of the Total-Form to the
blind king, Dhritarashtra, Sanjaya explains to the wicked
King the glory of the Mighty One. The Lord in His
Universal aspect was bursting in his own brilliance and
the divine glory of it was almost blinding; and this may
be another reason why more intimate details are not given
by Sanjaya in the previous two verses. In order to convey
this idea Sanjaya is using this strange but powerful simile.

The glorious shine of that Mighty Being is almost, it is
said, as luminous as if a thousand suns were to rise up at
once in the sky. In the Upanishadic lore also we have the

description of the Atman almost in the same language. But somehow or other, it must be admitted that in the mouth of Sanjaya, especially when he is describing the Divine-Form of Krishna, it gathers almost a new glamour and an arresting glory.

Fattening the picture with some more details, Sanjaya adds :

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।

अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥ १३ ॥

13. *tatrai katham jagat krtsnam
pravibhaktam anekadha
apasyad devadevasya
sarire pandavas tada*

तत्र - There, एकस्थम् - resting in one, जगत् - the universe, कृत्स्नम् - the whole, प्रविभक्तम् - divided, अनेकधा - in many groups, अपश्यत् - saw, देवदेवस्य - of the God of Gods, शरीरे - in the body, पाण्डवः - son of Pandu, तदा - then.

13. There, in the body of the God of Gods, Pandva (son of Pandu) then saw the whole Universe resting in one, with its many groups.

In that Divine Form of the Lord, Arjuna perceived how the entire world of manifold varieties has been brought together and packed to rest at one and the same place. We have already noticed that the concept of the Cosmic Man is the vision of the Universe through a mind which has ceased to act with the concept of time or space. This vision

of “ *the many in one* ” is not so much a physical perception but it is an intellectual comprehension. It is, therefore, not necessary that the Universe has shrunk into the shape of Krishna. It will be equally efficient if Arjuna had the required sense of oneness in the world of matter, and if he were to look at the Universe through his understanding he can intellectually come to estimate the oneness of the Universe.

To quote a parallel in our modern science, we may consider the attempt of Chemistry to classify all the existing substances. The infinite number of things in the world, when brought on the laboratory tables, are found to be constituted of the elements, ninety-two in number. This understanding of the elements soon yielded its place when the atom-contents in them were discovered to be nothing other than the electrons, protons and neutrons. If a Scientist who knows the three “irons” were to look through his knowledge at the manifold substances, it would be very easy for him to see that all things of the world are in the three factors which are the contents of each atom. In fact now there are only three elements in the world, the triple ‘trons.’ Similarly here, when Arjuna gained his special knowledge through the grace of Krishna, he comes to recognise the whole Universe in the very body of the God-Principle, the total intellect.

Arjuna's psychological and physical reactions on seeing this form, are being very carefully noted and reported by Sanjaya :

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनंजयः ।

प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्चलिरभाषत ॥ १४ ॥

14. *tatah sa vismayavisto*
hrstaroma dhanamjayah
pranamya sirasa devam
krtanjalir abhasata

ततः - Then, सः - he, विस्मयाविष्टः - filled with wonder, हृष्टरोमा - with hair standing on end, धनंजयः - Arjuna, प्रणम्य - having prostrated, शिरसा - with (his) head, देवम् - the God, कृताञ्चलिः - with joined palms, अभाषत - spoke.

14. Then, he, Dhananjaya (Arjuna), filled with wonder, with his hair standing on end, bowed down his head to the God and spoke with joined palms.

On seeing this transcendental vision, emotions of wonderment and consequent horripulations are noticed in Arjuna. Though Sanjaya is far away he not only seems to see minute physical details of each soldier upon the battle-field but he seems to have a power to peep over the body into the mind-and-intellect equipment of each individual. The inner wonder-emotions in Arjuna's mind is as much evident to Sanjaya as was his hairs astir standing on his body. Arjuna with folded palms, bending his head low, for the first time now opens his mouth to talk. That so long Arjuna did not speak is in itself a positive description of the choking emotions that he was under at the sight of this sweetly unnerving Divine Form.

What were the words of Arjuna? Listen :

अर्जुन उवाच

पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे

सर्वास्तथा भूतविशेषसंघान् ।

ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थ-

मृषींश्च सर्वानुरागांश्च दिव्यान् ॥ १५ ॥

Arjuna Uvaca

15. *pasyami devams tava deva dehe
saryams tatha bhutavisesasamghan
brahmanam isam kamalasanastham
rsinis ca sarvan uragams ca divyan*

पश्यामि - (I) see, देवान् - the Gods, तव - your, देव - O God, देहे - in the body, सर्वान् - all, तथा - also, भूतविशेषसंघान् - hosts of various classes of beings, ब्रह्माणम् - Brahma, ईशम् - the Lord, कमलासनस्थम् - seated on the Lotus, ऋषीन् - Sages, च - and, सर्वान् - all, उरगान् - serpents, च - and, दिव्यान् - divine.

Arjuna Said

15. I see all the Gods, O God, in your body, and (also) hosts of various classes of beings, Brahma, the Lord, seated on the Lotus, all the Rishis and celestial serpents.

When the Prince addresses Krishna as the resplendent (*Deva*), he is endorsing the comparison of the Lord to the light of thousand suns which was used earlier by Sanjaya. Enumerating the features recognised by him on the body of

Krishna, Arjuna says, “*In the body I see all the devas and hosts of all grades of beings*”. This was already indicated by Sanjaya when he described the Universal Form as ‘wearing numerous robes’, ‘adorning itself with different types of divine ornaments’, ‘wearing garlands of celestial beauty’, and as bearing ‘an arsenal of weapons in its innumerable hands.’

These descriptions show that in Krishna one could recognise not only the things of this world but in the *Virat*-form of the Lord even the Devas are represented. The same *adhidaiva-idea* is very directly insisted upon by Arjuna in this stanza when he describes among the things that he saw in Krishna the Creator, Brahmaji, (*Brahmanam*), the annihilator, Siva, (*Isam*); and the sustainer, Vishnu, (*kamalasnanastham*), along with a host of ancient seers!

“*And celestial serpents*”—In poetry it is a technique often very effective, employed by great poets wherein they suddenly step down from the sublime to the ridiculous or the grotesque, only to shock the readers and thereby tap out of them the necessary amount of special attention which the theme demands. It is indicated here that from Brahmaji in the heavens, to the serpents in the holes of the earth, all are represented in the Lord’s Cosmic Form. The microcosm (*Vyashiti*) is the macrocosm (*Samashiti*). And this is explained and realised by all great thinkers of the world. But nobody has ever before tried to express this philosophical idea in the form of a vivid objective representation. Vyasa was the pioneer in this art and none has yet dared to follow him in this arduous task.

The gripping details that can unnerve even the most courageous are given out now by Arjuna :

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं

पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्त रूपम् ।

नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं

पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥ १६ ॥

16. *anekabahudaravaktranetram*

pasyami tvam sarvato nantarupam

nantam na madhyam na punas tava dim

pasyami visvesvara visvarupa

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रत् - With manifold arms
stomachs, mouths and eyes, पश्यामि - (I) see,
त्वाम् - Thee, सर्वतः - on every side, अनन्तरूपम् -
of boundless form, न - not, अन्तम् - end, न - not,
मध्यम् - middle, न - not, पुनः - again, तव - Thy,
आदिम् - origin, पश्यामि - (I) see, विश्वेश्वर - O Lord
of the Universe, विश्वरूप - O Cosmic form.

16. I see Thee of boundless form on every side with
manifold arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes;
neither the end, nor the middle, nor also the
beginning do I see, O! Lord of the Universe,
O! Cosmic Form.

A limited human intellect is not the instrument to per-
ceive in one sweep the Infinite majesty of the Universal
Form. It must necessarily stand staggered at the vastness
of the concept and the significances of its sheer dimensions.
That the Lord is the one dynamic Truth behind every organ-
of-activity and in every existant thing is indicated here when
Arjuna says that in the Lord's Universal Form "I see Thee
of boundless form on every side with manifold arms, stomachs,

mouths and eyes ". This is not to be construed as a caricature of Truth. This warning is necessary inasmuch as hasty artists rush to this field of thought, inspired by the theme, to represent with their brushes and colours, this Cosmic Form And they all necessarily fail.

The Universal Oneness is not an object of perception ; it is only a fact to be realised or apprehended. Only upon the canvas of our understanding can we fully paint that intellectual comprehension of this Infinite Theme divine. This is endorsed by the very words of Arjuna that immediately follow in the stanza, *neither the end, nor the begining, nor the middle of Thee do I see* " The description of the Truth—from which all names and forms rise up, in which they exist and into which they all merge back at the end of their temporary play—cannot be better done in any other way, and those alone who can with sympathetic understanding court these shy stanzas can come to appreciate their zealously guarded rich beauties and luxurious warmth.

The above stanzas expressed the oneness, that threads through the mortal beings and finite things of the world, making a single garland of them of all. *It may be doubted whether the deified denizens of the divine heurarchy are also represented upon this wonder form. This is answered in the following :-*

किरीटिनंगदिनं चक्रिणं च
तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्
दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥ १७ ॥

17. *kiritinam gadinam cakrinam ca*
tejorasim sarvato diptimantam
pasyami tvam durniriksyam samantad
diptanalarkadyutim aprameyam

किरीटिनम् - One with diadem, गदिनम् -with club, चक्रिणम् - with discus, च - and, तेजोराशिम् - a mass of radiance, सर्वतः - everywhere, दीप्तिमन्तम् - shining, पश्यामि - (I) see, त्वाम् - Thee, दुर्निरीक्ष्यम् - very hard to look at, समन्तात् - all round, दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिम् - blazing like burning fire and sun, अप्रमेयम् - immeasurable.

17. I see Thee with Crown Club and Discus ; a mass of radiance shining everywhere, very hard to look at, all round blazing like burning fire and sun, and incomprehensible.

Continuing his description of the Cosmic Form the Pandava Prince stammers out more and more details of what he comprehends in that incomprehensible Divine extravaganza. He sees therein the Crown, the Club, and the Discus. These are symbolic insignia which Lord Vishnu, in all the mythological descriptions, always is said to carry

Hindu Gods are represented as having certain divine symbols and they have all their respective special significances—His kingship and lordliness over the world of finite things and happenings. He alone is the Lord who is a master of circumstances and a ruler of his impulses. A slave to life and its enchantments is a weakling, whose crown rests on him only temporarily like the gilt-ed-card-board-crown of an actor playing on the stage. No authority or effectiveness in life is possible unless the man in power has

self-control and self-mastery. No man can live a happy and mighty life unless he has conquered his passions and crowned himself with a kingship over himself. He is Vishnu and he alone deserves the crown.

The four-handed Vishnu carries in his hands the Conch, the Discus, the Club and the Lotus. This is externally symbolical. The Lotus represents in India peace and joy, auspiciousness and happiness. The Conch blows and calls man to duty; and if there be a generation that listens not to the higher call in themselves, restlessness, war, pestilence, famine, storms and chaotic social and communal disturbances, visit them—the Club descends to smother the generation to shape and discipline. Even after this punishment, if there be a generation so totally dissipated that it cannot improve, then comes the Discus—the sharp toothed wheel, ever-revolving, the Whirling Weapon of Time (*Kalacakra*).

In Arjuna's description when we find these as part of the Universal Form, it becomes evident that the same Truth is the Substratum, not only to lowest of the low worms, but even to the Trinity. The Eternal Truth is one and the same everywhere at all times; only Its manifestations are varied, and the amount of Divinity sparkling from each differs from each other, according to the grossness or subtilty of the equipments through which the same Infinite Reality express Itself.

“A mass of radiance, shining everywhere, all round blazing like the burning Sun and Fire, hard to gaze on” :- One of the most expressive lines in this description, this brings home to us the glory of Pure Awareness. This is not “light” in the physical sense of the term; but all the same we have to use the word, borrowed from the ordinary language, though it is applied here with a special significance. Consciousness

is the 'light' in which we so clearly "see" our own thoughts and emotions. It is the same that, beaming out through the eyes, throws "light" upon the world and illumine for us the *forms* and *shapes*. The same Consciousness, beaming out through the ears, with its special "light" illumines *sound*, and so on. Naturally, therefore, the Universal Form of Krishna, representing in Himself the Infinite Awareness had to be described, in the faltering language of Arjuna, as a mass of resplendant light blinding all faculties of perception, feeling and understanding.

"Incomprehensive (*Aprameya*)"— So far, though Arjuna described as best as he could the Form and the feelings It had engendered in him, there is a streak of desperation running along these stanzas. Arjuna feels that he has not captured the theme securely in the web of his language. Language expresses that which is perceived or felt or understood. Here is a Form which Arjuna experiences; he sees, he feels, and he in himself comprehends it. And yet, strangely enough, here is an experience that volatilises and escapes all attempts at bottling it in language. He seems to be not satisfied by the objective description which he gave in the language of his eyes, ears etc.; and he feels equally unhappy with his language of emotion, as felt by his mind.

True to himself the wonder-struck mortal is trying to sing out the glory of what he lives, now as a last resort, in the language of his intellect. But even here he can only cry in despair, "Oh Lord Thou art even incomprehensible". Though the Universal Form is painted here by the author in the language of an "objective experience", he makes us understand that the Truth is the *subject* and not an object of even the intellect. The Self is the *knower*, the *feeler*, the *perceiver*. It is not the perceived, the felt or the known.

"*From this vision of Thy power of Yoga, I infer*" :—

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं

त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परंनिधानम् ।

त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता

सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥ १८ ॥

18. *tvam aksaram paramam veditayam*
tvam asya visvasya param nidhanam
tvam avyayah sasvatadharmagopta
sanatanas tvam puruso mato me

त्वम् - Thou, अक्षरम् - imperishable, परमम् - the Supreme Being, वेदितव्यम् - worthy to be known, त्वत् - Thou, अस्य - (of) this, विश्वस्य - of universe, परम् - the great, निधानम् - Treasure-house, त्वम् - Thou, अव्ययः - imperishable, शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता - Protector of the Eternal Dharma, सनातनः - ancient, त्वम् - Thou, पुरुषः - Purusha, मतः - opinion, मे - of Me.

18. Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme Being worthy to be known. Thou art the great treasure-house of this universe ; Thou art the imperishable Protector of the Eternal Dharma ; in my opinion, Thou art the Ancient Purusha.

From every experience, all intelligent men try to gather their own conclusions which alone in fact constitute true knowledge. Arjuna had a great experience, too subtle for words to express or for his intellect to comprehend it fully in all its entirety. But from what he saw, he tries to draw certain conclusions. Crystallised into his understanding, the conclusions are that the Power behind this Cosmic Form

is that which is the Imperishable Supreme Truth, which is learning's highest theme.

When we see that all the waves playing on the surface of the ocean, manifesting and disappearing after a temporary existence into the very waters from which they rose, we generally conclude that the ocean is the source of all waves. It becomes at once the rest-house for the waves, or the treasure-house for all the disturbances. Similarly, Arjuna comes to the intelligent conclusion that Krishna, as the Cosmic Form, is the very Substratum from which the pluralistic world of phenomena rises up, exists in and gets merged into. The Universe (*Viswa*) mentioned here, is not merely the astronomers' universe of physical things, but, in Vedanta, *Viswa* is the sum-total experiences of everyone, gained through the individual instruments of perception, feeling and understanding. Lord is the foundation (*Nidhanam*) for the entire universe of disturbances, experienced by us, at our physical mental and intellectual levels.

Things that change can continue to do so only in a changeless substratum. The world-of-change plays ever to the tunes of Time and Space. But, in order that we may feel a continuity in the happenings, and thereby gain a comprehensive experience of the total, there must be one constant and changeless "knowing principle" that registers the happenings, without itself in the least involving in the change. That Truth is the Self, and the Self alone is that which could take upon itself the stupendous Universal Form (*Viswarupa*). Keeping these ideas in mind, Arjuna declares that He who has transformed Himself into this Wonder Form is the One Changeless Truth that permeates the entire realm of changes and modifications.

“*Thou art the deathless Guardian of the Eternal Dharma*” (*Saswatha-Dharma-Goptha*):— Even though the theme is so mighty and the delineation so unique, the giant intellect of Vyasa finds it almost a pleasant afternoon-game, wherein his artistic thirst to add beauty never gets damped even for once. He is at his ease. Here is an instance of the incomparable beauty in the artistic turn of his words: so expressive, so economical and so significant. The term “Eternal-Dharma-Guardian” is so happily blended, that it can be “*Guardian of the Eternal Dharma*” or “*the Eternal Guardian of Dharma*” or “*Eternal Guardian of the Eternal Dharma*”. The term *Dharma* was already explained earlier in our discourses. Since, the Divine Self is the true nature of man, and the Self being Eternal and All-prevading, the Hindu *Dharma* which deals with It, is also called rightly as “the Eternal Dharma” (*Sanadhana Dharma*).

In India, to the Hindus, the protector of his *Dharma* is not a mortal king or a priest-class. The Supreme alone is its guardian, inasmuch as the Hindus are not the followers of any accidental prophet who had a fleeting historical reality and a limited mission of serving his immediate generation with the best he had then to give. To the Hindu the Eternal Truth is his goal, his master and his way. We demand no mortal power to protect our *Dharma* with its Poison-gas and Atom-bomb. Nor do we need any organised army of men who have been perverted to believe that ‘Our God is the only Lord’ and ‘our prophet alone is the only saviour’ and ‘our seats get reserved in the Heavens if we convert, by means both fair and a few of the infedels!’

“*You are the Ancient Purusha, is my opinion*”:— In Vedanta the very physical structure is considered as a Capital-City with nine gates, each controlled and guarded by its presiding Deity. That which dwells in the city, here

meaning the body, is in Sanskrit 'Purusha'. In the context of the stanza, it only means that the solution for the riddle of life, which is the source or substratum of the whole universe, is to be sought, not among the world of objects but within the very layers of personalities in us until we discover it as the *Purusha*, the Eternal The Conscious Principle, which is the Spark of Life in everyone, thus is here indicated to be the very Eternal Truth which alone can take up the Form Universal, as it stands now in front of Arjuna's bewildered gaze.

“Moreover” :—

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यं
मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।
पश्यमि त्वां दीप्तहुताशक्त्रं
स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥ १९ ॥

19. *anadimadhyantam anantaviryam*
anantabahum sasisuryanetram
pasvami tvam diptahutasavaktram
svatejasa visvam idam tapantam

अनादिमध्यान्तम् – Without beginning, middle or end, अनन्तवीर्यम् – infinite in power, अनन्तबाहुम् – of endless arms, शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् – the sun and the moon (your) eyes, पश्यामि – (I) see, त्वाम् – you, दीप्तहुताशक्त्रम् – the burning fire of your mouth, स्वतेजसा – with your radiance, विश्वम् – the universe, इदम् – this, तपन्तम् – heating.

19 I see You without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of endless arms, the sun and the moon being Your eyes, the burning fire Your mouth : heating the whole universe with Your radiance

Counting the description of the Infinite as comprehended by the subtle perception of Arjuna, and interpreted by his intellect in terms of the Universe of things and names, it is explained, "*I see Thee without beginning, middle and end, infinite in power, of infinite arms*". As we saw earlier, this pen-picture drawn by Vyasa with his eloquent poetry has a false import that the theme is an object, and many are the artists who had tried to capture this form on the canvass. The folly is clear to every intelligent student of Vedanta. That which is Infinite, without beginning or end, cannot be brought within the area of a limited canvass-piece. But, at the same time, the phrase "*of infinite arms*" tickles the painter to express it through his own art. In fact, the Universal Form, standing out so clearly in relief-work in the transcendental apprehension of the author, can be comprehended only by students of deep understanding and developed intuition.

Here, by the term "*of infinite arms*" it is only meant that the Supreme Self as the dynamic life, is the one essential strength behind every hand that acts and achieves.

"*The Sun and the Moon thine eyes*":— Some commentators attribute that the Lord's sun-eye is for chastisement and His moon-eye is for blessing the generation. This is a meaning that has been pressed out by over-straining the text, and this is unfair to the *Geeta*. The sun and the Moon together represent the source of the entire light-energy : the Sun representing the source of all light and the moon representing all the reflected and otherwise conditioned light. In

describing that the eyes of the Universal Form are constituted of the Sun and the Moon, it only implies the oneness of the individual and the cosmic.

It is very well-known that the “principle of light” is the very principle in the eye, inasmuch as if the eyes were not there, light itself would have no existence. And also, if the “principle of light” were not blessing the objects of form, the instruments of cognition—eyes—could not have functioned at all. Here we have the description of the totality. All the eyes in the whole universe, together as the “principle of Vision”, is described as the pair-of-eyes in the Universal Form of the Lord. Therefore, in the technical language of Vedanta, it has been aptly described here that “*the Sun and the Moon are thine eyes*”.

“*Burning fire thine mouth*” :— As in the above, here Fire has been considered as the principle behind speech and the principle governing taste; warm food tastes better; frozen food has no taste. The presiding deity of speech can *fire* the generation. *Heated* discussions always take place; cold discussion is a painful monotony. Speeches that freeze the audience is only a sleep lullaby. And, mouth being the seat for both instrument of speech and taste, the mouth of the *Viswarupa* is explained here as Fire. And yet what a pity, that red paint of the painter should copy the picture of a funeral pyre to represent His Mouth and ugly the mystic symbolism that is described in this chapter.

“*Heating the whole universe with Thy radiance*” :— The Self cannot but be luminous, because Consciousness illumines all experiences, at all times, in all living organisms. This light of Consciousness not only illumines, but imparts the warmth of life to the entire universe. From the very

statement it is evidently clear that the ancient Hindu had turned his gaze inward only when he had exhausted his observations and study of the world outside. It seems that he knew well that at a certain band of temperature alone could life continue on this globe : below the required minimum and above the maximum temperature life would get extinct.

The light that is emanating from Truth is its own light and not a capacity which it has derived from any other source. It is by “Thy own Radiance” (*Swa Thejasa*) that the life is sustained in the world of names and forms.

Objective description have always in them the danger of others' misunderstanding that the Truth so described is limited both by time and space. *Vyasa is ever conscious of this, and he is never tired of repeating again and again, within each stanza and also in between the stanzas, with direct statements and pointed indications, that what is described here is the Infinite, All-prevading, Truth itself The following is an example :—*

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि

व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्चसर्वाः ।

दृष्ट्वाद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं

लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥ २० ॥

20. *dyavaprthivyor idam anatarā hi*
vyaptam tvayai kena disas ca sarvā
dr̥stva dbhutam rupam ugram tave dam
lokatrayam pravyathitam mahatman

द्यावपृथिव्योः - Of heaven and earth, इदम् -
 this, अन्तरम् - interspace, हि - indeed, व्याप्तम् -

are filled, त्वया - by you, एकेन - alone, दिशः - quarters, च - and, सर्वाः - all, दृष्ट्वा - having seen, अद्भुतम् - wonderful, रूपम् - form, उग्रम् - terrible, तव - your, इदम् - this, लोकत्रयम् - the three worlds, प्रव्यथितम् - are trembling with fear, महात्मन् - O Mahatman.

20. This space between earth and the heavens and all the quarters are filled by You alone ; having seen this, Your wonderful and terrible form, the three worlds are trembling with fear, O great-souled Being.

Truth, as apprehended by Arjuna, pervades the entire world-of-objects and even the concepts of time and space are not independent of this Truth. The theme that has been described here, we should not forget, is the Infinite, the Eternal. Naturally, it is said here, "*By Thee alone, the space between heaven and earth and all the quarters of the sky, is pervaded*".

The universal oneness is no cheap idea to play with tamely ; the more one realises it the more one gets staggered at the immensity of it all. A limited intellect unprepared to grasp such a mighty and enormous fact may shudder at the realisation of such a vast and majestic Truth.

"*Seeing the marvellous and the awful form*", Arjuna says, "*the worlds are trembling*". It is psychologically true that each man sees the world as he himself is. We look at the world through the windows of our mind ; as our mind, so is the world to us. Arjuna felt staggered and trembling in himself and; when he looked at the world in that mental condition, he could not but see that the whole world was equally wonder-struck and trembling as he himself was.

Even while he is preoccupied with the great theme in hand, Vyasa does not forget himself of the fundamental behaviour in man. These fine touches add a glow of realism to this mystic picture of incomparable beauty and immeasurable depth.

Arjuna had a doubt regarding the possibilities of success in the war. In order to remove this, Lord Krishna is giving Arjuna a peep into the future that is in store for the world.*

अमी हि त्वां सुरसंघा विशन्ति

केचिद्भीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।

स्वस्तीयुक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसंघाः

स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥ २१ ॥

21. *ami hi tvam surasamgha visanti
kecid bhītaḥ prañjalayo grṇanti
svasti ty uktva maharṣisiddhasamghaḥ
stuvanti tvam stutibhiḥ puṣkalabhiḥ*

अमी - These, हि - verily, त्वाम् - (into) you, सुरसंघा - hosts of Devas, विशन्ति - enter, केचित् - some, भीताः - in fear, प्राञ्जलयः - with joined palms, गृणन्ति - extol, स्वस्ति - May it be well, इति - thus, उक्त्वा - having said, महर्षिसिद्धसंघाः - bands of great Rishis and Siddhas, स्तुवन्ति - praise, त्वाम् - you, स्तुतिभिः - with hymns, पुष्कलाभिः - sublime.

* “Yadwa Jayema, Yadiwa No Jayeyuh”—II-6

21. Verily, into You enter these hosts of Devas ; some extol You in fear with joined palms ; “ May it be well ” thus saying, bands of great Rishis and Siddhas praise You with hymns Sublime.

The running commentary given out so long by Arjuna was the description of a stagnant Cosmic Form, at once “ marvellous and awful ”. Here We find Arjuna describing the movements and actions that he observes in that Cosmic Form of the Lord. “ *These hosts of deities* ” enter into and disappear there in the Universal Form. Sankara commenting upon this work “ *Hosts of Deities* ” interprets it to mean the Duryodhana-folk. This interpretation, though not inconsistent with what is yet to follow, it is true that its meaning is not the natural fragrance of the terms used in the text.

If some are thus irredeemably drawn towards the Lord’s Form, and there they get themselves disappeared, others who are waiting and watching the process are necessarily getting panic with fear. When man is threatened with a sure mishap, and when he knows no remedy or defence against it, he, in his desperation, always turns to prayer. This psychological truth is beautifully brought out here, when it explains how “ *Some in fear extol Thee with folded palms* ”.

And this is not all. Bands of great Rishis and perfected-men (*Siddhas*)* who are not at all perturbed by the Vision of the Totality, with super-human tranquility and an inward peace built upon the rocks of their own wisdom, they merely sing sublime† hymns of glory to the mighty apparation of

* It is believed that there are about, 88,000 such Perfect-masters, who are godly in wisdom, ever-serving the cause of the Life Divine and guiding subtly each seeker towards their consummate goal

† Sankara indreprets ‘ Pushkala bhñh ’ meaning complete Both meanings are possible

the total phenomenal world of multiplicity. They do so wishing "*Mav peace be*" to all, always. They realise in their wisdom that the face of the cosmos assumes such a terrible ferocity only when it has launched into a wholesale reconstruction scheme. The men of wisdom also know that nothing is lost in such a programme of "construction through destruction". Therefore, they hail this process and wish the world a brilliant golden era, which is sure to follow immediately after such a total upheaval.

In this stanza the entire world of phenomena has been beautifully brought under three heads: the "Sub-normal", the "Normal", and the "Super-normal". The "Sub-normal" unconsciously die away. They are the victims of the process of death, and they are so miserably unaware of the very process that they do not revolt at all again sit. The "Normal" dreads when they intelligently observe and become aware of the process of decay and death. They become apprehensive of their own fate, and, not realising that by death nothing is lost, in their essential ignorance they shudder at the inescapable lot of all living names and forms.

Yet there is another set constituted of "Super-normal" men who have the sufficient intellectual apprehension of the Totality and Its behaviour that they are not at all perturbed, if what is happening in the universe every day were to visit them also one day. When bubbles are broken, to those who know what they are and how they are born, there is no occasion to regret. Similarly, these *Siddhas* when they see the upheaval that precedes a dying culture's reorientation, they recognise therein the mighty Power of Truth, and wish only good luck and peace to the world so reconstructed by the very hands of the Lord.

In whichever light we may observe this work we must come to realise how great a psychologist Vyasa himself must

have been, and also how beautifully the knowledge of the mental behaviour has been harnessed for quickening the evolution of man to reach the fulfillment of all his struggles.

How did then the Gods of the Heavens react to this spectacular vision of the Cosmic Man in action?

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या

विश्वेऽश्विनौमरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।

गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसंघा

वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥ २२ ॥

22. *rudraditya vasavo ye ca sadhya*

visve svinau marutas co sampas ca

gandharvayaksasurasiddhasamgha

viksante tvam vismitas cai va sarve

रुद्रादित्या - Rudras and Adityas, वसवः - Vasus, ये - these, च - and, साध्याः - Sadhyas, विश्वे - Viswadevas, अश्विनौ - the two Aswins, मरुतः - Maruts, च - and, उष्मपाः - pitris, च - and, गन्धर्व यक्षासुरसिद्धसंघाः - hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas, वीक्षन्ते - are looking at, त्वाम् - you, विस्मिताः - astonished, च - and, एव - even, सर्वे - all.

22. The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, Viswa-Devas, the two Aswins, Maruts, Ushmapas and hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas—they are all looking at You, all quite astonished.

Continuing the description, Arjuna says that among the hosts of beings who gaze on the Mysterious Form, assumed now by Krishna, there were deities who are all the Lords of the phenomena, worshipped and revered by the generations of the Vedic-period. Even they, looking at the Universal Form, stand struck with wonder and astonishment.

The terms used here have all been described during our discourses on the previous chapters. The Spirits of Destruction (*Rudras*), the Sun (*Adityas*), the Lords of the Seasons (*Vasus*), the Spirit of the Sky (*Sadhyas*)*, the Lesser Lords (*Viswadevas*)†, the Horsemen Twins (*Ashwins*), the Storm Lords (*Maruths*), the Heat-drinkers (*Ushmapas*)‡, the hosts of Heavenly Musicians (*Gandharvas*) *Yakshas*, *Asuras* and *Siddhas*—these constitute the crowd that gaze on the terrible form of the Lord, “*all quite astounded*”.

This stanza may not be quite appealing to us who are today strangers to the conceptions which these terms represent. But Arjuna was a student of the Vedas, and was the child of that age, and he was naturally well soaked in these

* Refer Rig Veda X 90 16. They are personifications of sacrificial rites and prayers: they are, as it were, the divine ‘middle men’ who convey the devotees’ prayers to that Lord to whom it was raised and ultimately bring about the fruition of the desires entertained by the devotee.

† This is a collective name for a set of inferior deities mentioned in the Rig Veda. In the Puranas we find mention of these deities, wherein it is considered that they are altogether ten in number. They include abstract qualities like Satya, Dhriti etc.

‡ This is a term used to indicate the dead ancestors—Pitrus—who are supposed to be ‘heat-drinkers’ inasmuch as it is believed that they come during functions dedicated to them and enjoy the offerings made to them only so long as it is hot. The idea, perhaps, must be that they take only the fragrance that rolls up the steaming food offered.

conceptions. The vocabulary of Arjuna could not have been therefore otherwise. We have only to watch for and understand the general effect produced upon the Pandava warrior by the Vision of the Totality, and the different reactions created in different types of minds. Each, according to its own intrinsic capacity, comprehended and appreciated the Vision of the entire Universe, so crystallised into one definite shapeless shape of all shapes.

Throwing more and more surer strokes Arjuna is bringing out his experiences to a precise conception upon the canvas of his listeners :

रूपमहत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं

महाबाहो बहुबाहुरुपादम् ।

बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं

दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम् ॥ २३ ॥

23. *rupam mahat te bahuvaktranetram*
mahabaho bahubahuupadam
bahudaram bahudamstrakaralam
drstva lokah pravyathitas tatha ham

रूपम् – Form, महत् – immeasurable, ते – your, बहुवक्त्रनेत्रम् – with many mouths and eyes, महाबाहो – O Mighty-armed, बहुबाहूरुपादम् – with many arms, thighs and feet, बहूदरम् – with many stomachs, बहुदंष्ट्राकरालम् – fearful with many teeth, दृष्ट्वा – having seen, लोकाः – the worlds, प्रव्यथिताः – are terrified, तथा – also, अहम् – I.

23. Having seen your immeasurable form with many mouths and eyes, O Mighty-armed, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and fearful with many tusks the worlds are terrified, and so too am I.

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं
व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा
धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥ २४ ॥

24. *nabhahsprsam diptam anekavarnam
vyattananam diptavisalanetram
drstva hi tvam pravyathitantaratma
dhrtim na vindami samam ca visno*

नभःस्पृशम् - Touching the sky, दीप्तम् - flaming, अनेकवर्णम् - in many colours, व्यात्ताननम् - with mouths wide open, दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् - with large fiery eyes, दृष्ट्वा - having seen, हि - verily, त्वाम् - you, प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा - terrified at heart, धृतिम् - courage, न - not, विन्दामि - (I) find, शमम् - peace, च - and, विष्णो - O Vishnu.

24. On seeing you (your form) touching the sky, flaming in many colours, with mouths wide open, with large fiery eyes, I am terrified at heart, and find neither courage nor peace, O Vishnu !

The uncommon vision, "*marvellous and awful*" experienced by Arjuna was not truly a localised form on a six-footed Lord Krishna. It was in fact a manifestation, vast and wide, extending almost to the frontiers of the All-pervading. And yet, the Pandava Prince realised it all in his inward vision as a limited-form, having a definite shape. In the intellectual understandings of all shapeless qualities, (like freedom, love, nationality etc.) when one comprehends them, one comes to give them each a substantiality, a form, well-defined and precisely outlined for one's own intellect, although never for one's own sense-organs. Similarly Arjuna too feels that the experience of the Universal Form, though All-pervading, has for him a definite shape. But when he tries to define the Form Universal, so well realised by him, his very expressions belie his own feelings and defeat his own purpose.

Arjuna finds that the entire world is terrified by the Great Grand Form representing in itself "*Many mouths and eyes, many arms and things, with many stomachs, and fearful with many tusks*". He also adds, "*So I am*". Psychologically it is true that when an individual is in a crowd of excited people, or in the company of good man of peaceful contemplation, that individual vicariously gathers unto himself the mental qualities of the crowd in which he finds himself. When "*the world is terrified*", confesses Arjuna, "*I too am*".

At the same time the Princely Pandava feels it insulting and cowardly for his royal heart to feel any fear. Therefore, Partha, justifying his own fear, describes the Terrible Form to be in fact formless, and that it absorbs into itself everything. The Universal Form touches the very skies above. It glows with a variety of colours. Its feary eyes

glow. Its open mouths consume everything. Altogether the vision is capable of unnerving even the Gods. Seeing this Arjuna confesses “*my heart quakes, and I lose my courage and my peace*”. It is very significant that it is in this condition of benumbing fear that the great hero addresses the Cosmic vision as “*O, Vishnu*”. *

As I said in the beginning, the conception-form so clearly defined in the intuitive understanding of Arjuna, is in fact the Infinite described in terms of Its own endless manifestations as the names and forms in the Universe. We the students of the Geeta should never forget these subtle under-currents of thought that Vyasa has so secretly kept for the profit of all diligent and sincere seekers of Truth.

Continuing his own Self explanations on why heroic heart should tremble in fear, the Pandava Prince continues, :—

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि
दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ २५ ॥

25. *damstrakaralani ca te mukhani
drstvai va kalanalsamnibhani
diso na jane na labhe ca sarma
prasida deveśa jagannivasa*

* The term Vishnu appears in the vedic literature where it is used in its etymological meaning as “one having long strides”. The measure between the two feet, while one walks is called the stride (or reach). The stride of a child is short when it is compared with the stride of a man. The all prevailing Infinite if it were to take its longest stride it should be from the “beginningless” to the “endless”. Thus, the term Vishnu has the implication “the All Prevailing”.

दंष्ट्राकरालानि - Fearful with tusks, च - and, ते - your, मुखानि - mouths, दृष्ट्वा - having seen, एव - even, कालानलसन्निभानि - blazing like Pralaya-fires, दिशः - the four quarters, न - not, जाने - know, न - not, लभे - do (I) find, च - and, शर्म - peace, प्रसीद - be gracious, देवेश - O Lord of the Devas, जगन्निवास - O home of the Universe.

25. Having seen Thy mouths fearful with tusk (blazing) like Pralaya fires, I know not the four quarters, nor do I find peace ; be gracious, O Lord of the Devas, O Home of the Universe.

“*Seeing the Universal-mouth terrible with tusks, threatening as the fire-of-deluge,*” confesses Arjuna, “*I have lost my sense of direction and I feels no peace*”. This is the Picture of Time : Time, the leveller of everything, the consumer of all forms. When an intellect comes to comprehend such a vast field, and that too all of a sudden, the very magnitude of it smothers all powers of discrimination and benumbs the individual for a moment. This chaotic condition of confusion experienced is expressed here, “*I know not the four quarters*”. And this is not the all, ‘*I find no peace*’ too.

In such a condition of extreme wonderment, the astounded mortal comes to realise that his physical might, his mental capacities and his intellectual subtilties are all, both individually and in their aggregate, very important vehicles indeed. The little Ego drops down its veil of vanity and its armour of false strength, and comes to stand naked meekly surrendering itself to the influence of the Cosmic Power. Prayer is the only resort to the individual who has thus fully

realised the emptiness of his own hollow vanities, in the presence of the Mighty Total, Supremely Divine.

In concluding this stanza with the humble prayer, “*Be gracious, O Lord, Thou art the home of the Universe*”, Vyasa has rightly indicated that true prayers can never rise up from a heart that is swollen with pride, and that entertains an exaggerated sense of self-importance. Only when man understands his own individual insignificance, in the context of the total universe, that true prayer can rise up from him almost involuntarily.

This particular section is mainly for reassuring Arjuna of the success that is yet to come in the future for himself and his army. Therefore, the Lord directly shows how the forces are entering into the inescapable “Mouth of Time” and disappear :*

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्यपुत्राः
सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसंघैः ।
भीष्मोद्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ
सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥ २६ ॥

26. *ami ca tvam dhrtarastrasva putrah
sarve sahai va vanipalasanghah
bhisma dronah sutaputras tatha sau
saha smadiyair api yodhamukhyaih*

अमी - These, च - and, त्वाम् - you, धृतराष्ट्रस्य - of Dhritarashtra, पुत्राः - sons, सर्वे - all, सह - with, एव - even, अवनिपालसंघैः - hosts of

* Starting from XI—21.

kings of the earth, भीष्मः - Bhishma, द्रोणः - Drona, सूतपुत्रः - son of the charioteer, तथा - also, असौ - this, सह - with, अस्मदीयैः - with (those) of ours, अपि - also, योधमुख्यैः - (with) warrior chiefs.

26. All the sons of Dhritarashtra with hosts of kings of the earth, Bhishma, Drona and Karna, the son of a Charioteer, with the warrior chiefs of ours ;

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति

दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।

केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु

संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥ २७ ॥

27. *vaktrani te tvaramana visanti*
damstrakaralani bhayanakani
kecid vilagna dasanantareshu
samdrsyannte curnitair uttamangaih

वक्त्राणि - Mouths, ते - your, त्वरमाणाः - hurrying, विशन्ति - enter, दंष्ट्राकरालानि - terrible-toothed, भयानकानि - fearful to behold, केचित् - some, विलग्नाः - sticking, दशनान्तरेषु - in the gaps between the teeth, संदृश्यन्ते - are found, चूर्णितैः - crushed to powder, उत्तमाङ्गैः - with (their) heads.

27. Into your mouths with terrible teeth and fearful to behold they precipitately enter. Some are found sticking in the gaps between the teeth with their heads crushed to powder.

A philosophy, that comprehends the totality without fear or favour and ever true to its mission of seeking Truth, cannot afford to ignore the destructive aspect in nature. No creation is possible without it being preceded by the process of destruction of its own existence as the raw material from which the created is produced. On the face of the Universe also, wherever there is "existence" it is nothing but a repetition of constant change, and change can be interpreted either in terms of constant creation with regard to the *changed products* or as a process of constant destruction with regard to the *products* that changed.

Thus we see in Hinduism the daring masters of the Aryan fold, while extolling the beauty of the Reality, not only indulged themselves in viewing It as the Omniscient Creator or as the Omnipotent Sustainer, but also as the All-powerful Devour of all names and forms. This may look dreadful to those creeds that have not yet come to watch and analyse Life in its totality

Arjuna's words are significant. He does not see the Universal Form itself devouring the names and forms. On the other hand, he observes, that all names and forms "*enter in haste into Thy mouth*". When we watch an ocean we do not find the ocean ever rising up to absorb the waves, but they, who have risen from the ocean, after their momentary play upon its surface, rush back to disappear into the very ocean. The multiplicity that has risen from the Totality, after its play upon the surface of Truth, must necessarily rush back in all hurry into the very Whole from which they had risen up.

Arjuna thus watches "*all the sons of Dhritarashtra, the hosts of kings, Bhishma, Drona, Karna, the son of the*

*charioteer**, along with the warrior chieftains of ours” entering precipitately into the yawning mouth of the principle of destruction in nature. This not only frightens Arjuna and unnerves him but also gives him a confidence to look ahead—in spite of the fact that in numerical strength, in supplies and in technicians, his own army was much inferior to the mighty forces of the Kurus. The vision which he saw, was in fact a peep into the future. In the *Viswarupa* when the Lord expresses Himself as the entire world of phenomena, in that conception of oneness, not only space shrinks, but even Time becomes an object-of-observation.

It is no wonder, therefore, that Arjuna saw in that picture the past merging with the present and moving forward to mingle with the entire future. When I have got the entire Geeta-book in front of me I can read either the preceding two pages or can skip over two pages and read the third page ahead, or according to my will and desire continue reading this very same page. Similarly, when the whole universe is brought at once within the compass of Arjuna’s vision he could see herein in one gaze “all the here and the there, and the everywhere”—so too the past, the present and the future. The modern scientists also have now come to realise and accept that Time and Space are one and the same, and they are each expressed in terms of the other†.

The seekers of Truth, themselves truthful, were not at all afraid whether their enquiry took them to the aspect of

* Son of the Lord Sun, born in Kunti, Karna is described in Mahabharatha as a half-brother to the Pandavas. The boy was brought up by a charioteer and some say that his foster-father was the king of Anga (Bengal). Karna fought on the sides of the Kurus and in the battle he was killed by Arjuna.

† It is not very rare that we say, ‘in the space of an hour’.

the terrible in truth. The world is a combination of the beautiful and the ugly, the good and the bad, the soft and the hard, the sweet and the bitter. God, the Lord, has Himself become all these and, therefore, no adoration of the Lord or estimate of the Reality will be complete, if, according to our taste, we recognise only the beautiful, the good, the soft and the sweet aspects of Him. An unprejudiced and detached mind will have to recognise Him as the ugly and the bad, the hard and the bitter also. That philosophy alone is complete which points out that the Supreme is, in fact, in Its Absolute Nature, beyond all these qualities also.

In the purely scientific approach, therefore, Arjuna is made to express all details, even if they be blood-curdling and gruesome. No doubt, *Geeta* has its own sense of realism. The mouth of death is described here with all faithfulness as “terrible with tusks”, “fearful to behold”.

How do they enter into Thy mouth ?—Arjuna says :—

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः

समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।

तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा

विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥ २८ ॥

28. *yatha nadinam bahavo mbuvegah
samudram eva bhimukha dravanti
tatha tava mi naralokavira
vtsanti vaktany abhivijvalanti*

यथा – As, नदीनाम् – of rivers, बहवः – many,
अम्बुवेगाः – water currents, समुद्रम् – to the ocean,
एव – verily, अभिमुखाः – towards, द्रवन्ति – flow,

तथा - so, तव - your, अमी - these, नरलोकवीराः -
heroes in the world of men, विशन्ति - enter,
वक्त्राणि - mouths, अभिविज्वलन्ति - flaming.

28. Verily as many torrents of rivers flow towards the
ocean, so these heroes in the world of men
enter your flaming mouths.

The one great characteristic of the Aryan race is that they are to a point of weakness essentially poetic in temperament. Whatever be the theme that they are handling, if any line of thought tickles the poetry in them they are incapable of rejecting it. However urgent his mission may be, a true Hindu must stop and bend down to enjoy and pat a way-side flower nodding in the breeze ! He is so acutely aware of the Presence of the Lord everywhere that to him wherever there is beauty it is a window through which he can have a peep into the anti-chambers of the Truth*.

Here is a typical example. Revered Vyasa as he bends down upon his work, suddenly gets tickled up by two wondrous pictures that supply in two irreplaceable analogies the entire picture of the world of names and forms rushing forward to get themselves disappeared. In this stanza the

* A story is told how a famous prostitute sitting on her balcony, noticed that an aged Sadhu was standing on the road, gazing at her beautiful form. Lost in admiration the monk gazed on, and the lady got tired of the state, got up from her seat and retired to her room. But, after two hours when she came back to her seat on the balcony she noticed the same Saint still standing there with his thirsty stare. The lady sent her maid inviting the revered old man to her apartment. Receiving the Saint with all respects, she enquired why at his sacred age he should so behave as to insult his ochre-robe. The answer given by the Sadhu is typical of the Hindu way-of-thinking. 'But'. the Sadhu replied. "it is not at you that I marvel, but through your beauty I was adoring the Artist that made it".

analogy of the torrential rivers, gushing ahead to reach the ocean and get themselves one with it, is taken up. Each river has no doubt its own distinct personality, gathered from the nature and condition of the very route which it had taken. At no point does any river pause or hesitate to gush forward. An observer of limited powers of understanding may say that each drop in its flow in the river is moving towards a known point down on its way; but to a true observer all rivers flow only towards the ocean, and they cannot, and will not, stop until they reach the ocean, having reached which all distinctions end.

Each drop of water in the river came from the ocean. As cloud it reached the mountains and there in the form of rain it manifested. Watering the lands on the banks and supplying life and nourishment to the fields they gushed down in their torrential haste to the very basin from which they took off this "mercy flight". Similarly, from the Totality the individuals have come to serve the race, to nourish the culture, to contribute to the beauty of the world... and yet, none of them can pause even for a moment enroute their pilgrimage. All must rush towards the source from which they rose up. The river loses nothing by reaching the ocean. Even while it is a river, though it gathers enroute certain special qualities, and, therefore, a special name, and has for itself a separate experientiable form, this temporary phase is only a convenience taken up by "the waters of the ocean" to make the dry land smile in plenty.

The more one gives one's thought to it the more can this stanza yield its secret joys and expose its shy beauty.

"Why and how do they enter? Arjuna says:—

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गाः

विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः !

तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोका

स्त्वापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥ २९ ॥

29. *yatha pradiptam jvalanam patangah
visanti nasaya samrddhavegah
tathai va nasaya visanti lokas
tava pi vaktrani samrddhavegah*

यथा - As, प्रदीप्तम् - blazing, ज्वलनम् - fire, पतङ्गाः - moths, विशन्ति - enter, नाशाय - to destruction, समृद्धवेगाः - with quickened speed, तथा - so, एव - only, नाशाय - to destruction, विशन्ति - enter, लोकाः - creatures, तव - your, अपि - also, वक्त्राणि - mouths, समृद्धवेगाः - with quickened speed.

29. As moths hurriedly rush into a blazing fire for their own destruction, so also these creatures hurriedly rush into your mouths for destruction.

The essential oneness, between the *manifest* that has come out of the unmanifest, and the very *unmanifest* which is the womb of every manifestation, has been beautifully brought out by the picture of the river, which has risen from the ocean, in all its haste rushing down to lose its very name and form, and become one with the ocean.

No analogy can be complete in itself. The picture of the river does not show any intrinsic conscious effort on the part of the river to reach the ocean. The living-kingdom, with

its own free discrimination, it may be doubted, may not act as the inert waters of the river. To show that even the sentient beings are irresistably drawn towards the mouth of their own destruction, by the whipping hand of instinct, here is given the example of "the moths precipitately rush into the blazing fire only to perish". To Vyasa the entire nature seems to be an open Book-of-scripture, explaining everywhere in all its happenings the fundamental facts that "the projection of the unmanifest to the manifest-condition is the process of *creation*" and that "the manifest merging back to its own haven of the unmanifest is destruction or death". That terrible looking monstrous happening called death, when approached in true understanding unmasks itself to reveal a gladdening face, ever cheerful and ever gay.

Arjuna's mental tension was mainly created out of his hasty evaluation of the enormous destruction he would be causing at the battle field of Kurukshetra. Krishna had to cure him, by lifting his disciple to heights from which he could witness and realise, in one sweeping gaze, the unavoidable phenomena of Death. A close and full understanding of any happening removes the fangs from its threatening hood! It is only when the discriminating intellect of man becomes drowsy with ignorance can the happenings around him threaten to smother him down. As the river hastens to the ocean, as the moths are irresistably flying into the fire, so too all names and forms must, and most willingly they do, rush towards the unmanifest. With this realisation anyone can thereafter face life fearless of death, since life itself becomes to him a process of continuous change.

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ता

लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।

तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं

भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥ ३० ॥

30. *lelihvase grasamanah samantad*
lokan samagran vadanir jvaladbhih
tejobhir apurya jagat samagram
bhasas tavo grah pratapanti vishno

लेलिह्यसे - You lick, ग्रसमानः - devouring, समन्तात् - on every side, लोकान् - the worlds, समग्रान् - all, वदनैः - with mouths, ज्वलद्भिः - flaming, तेजोभिः - with radiance, आपूर्य - filling, जगत् - the world, समग्रम् - the whole, भासः - rays, तव - your, उग्राः - fierce, प्रतपन्ति - are burning, विष्णो - O Vishnu!

30. Devouring all worlds on every side with Thy flaming mouths, You are licking (in enjoyment) Your fierce rays, filling the whole world with radiance, are burning, O Vishnu !!

After the explosion of surging poetry, Vyasa faithfully comes back to the line of thought he was developing earlier. Hosts of men and things of the world reach the Mouth, to perish therein. The hungry Mouth is never tired, for, the principle of destruction has a never-ending appetite, and after “swallowing all the world all round you are licking your lips”, exclaims Arjuna.

In fact, the stanza clearly brings forth the implications in the concept of the Trinity. The Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer are, though conceptually three distinct entities, in their actual workings they constitute a simultaneous process. Creation is continued in a chain of destructions, and the process of destruction is not a total annihilation but it is only a change of one form into another, and thereby ending in a new Creation. "Constructive destruction" is the secret philosophy behind the continuity of existence observed everywhere.

In a cinema-show the various poses on the film are made to run on in front of the arclight, and each picture that has passed away from the arclight may be considered, as dead, and those reaching the arclight as those that are born. The continuity in these two series of happenings, births and deaths, or constructions and destructions, gives us the hallucination of a logical sequence in the theme revealed on the screen. Continued by 'place and time' things and beings, happenings and circumstances, come and go in the plane of our lived experiences. and their continuity is what we experience as "existence".

The above idea can be repeated in the language of our traditional belief in the Trinity. Brahmaji, the Creator, cannot create unless Shiva, the Destroyer, is functioning simultaneously on the same anvil. And Vishnu, the Sustainer, will never come to play unless the Creator and the Destroyer work feverishly and consistently. The whole world of multiplicity is thus an expression of Vishnu, the Sustainer, which is nothing other than the product of the game played both by the Creator and the Destroyer.

When with such a depth of understanding Arjuna looks at the mighty resplendence of the Totality Form he feels almost blindfellen by “ *the fiery radiance of its fierce rays* ”.

“ *Because Thou art fearful, therefore.. .. .* ”

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो

नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।

विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं

न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥ ३१ ॥

31. *akhyahi me ko bhavan ugravupo
namo stu te devavara prasida
vinjatam icchami bhavantam adyam
na hi prajanami tava pravrittim*

आख्याहि - Tell, मे - me, कः - who (are), भवान् - you, उग्ररूपः fierce in form, नमः - salutations, अस्तु - be, ते - to you, देववर - O God Supreme, प्रसीद - have mercy, विज्ञातुम् - to know, इच्छामि - (I) wish, भवन्तम् - you, आद्यम् - the original being, न - not, हि - indeed, प्रजानामि - (I) know, तव - your, प्रवृत्तिम् - doing.

31. Tell me who you are so fierce in form. Sulutations to you, O God Supreme; have mercy. I desire to know you, the original Being. I know not indeed your purpose.

Arjuna realises suddenly the sanctity and the divinity of the Lord's Power and so in inspired veneration he bows

down to Him, whom till now he took to be but a cow-herd boy of Brindhavan ! Intellectual though he may be, here is an experience too big for the Pandava to observe fully, analyse carefully and digest completely. The only thing he can do is to surrender himself at the very feet of the Lord, requesting Him, “ *Tell me who thou art* ”.

To reinforce the solidarity of the above question Arjuna indicates that he deserves the answer to his question inasmuch as, “ *I desire to know Thee, O ! the Primeval One* ”. It is very well-known in the text-books of spirituality that “ a burning aspiration to know ” is the motive force behind the every seeker’s mind and intellect. But here Arjuna is preoccupied with a problem of challenge that is facing him, and therefore, he is not, in fact, directly seeking the Divine Truth behind the Vision. His enquiry is highly coloured by the emotion of fear in him, and his anxiety to know what would be the outcome of the war. This is clear from the last line wherein he explains, “ *I know not indeed thy purpose* ”. The enquiry made here is on what was the mission of the Lord in taking such a terrible form and in thus presenting Himself in front of Arjuna, exhibiting how the Kaurava-forces are marching in all hurry towards the Infinite Mouth of Death. When he wants very intensively a thing to happen, and, when sure signs forecasting his success present themselves, he would need a confirmation from others. Similarly, here, Arjuna is witnessing what he exactly wishes for himself to happen. But the Prince wants to get a confirmation of the same form Krishna Himself. Hence this question.

Introducing Himself as the manifestation of Truth in its aspect of destruction the Lord in the Universal Form declares :-

Sribhagavan Uvaca :-

श्रीभगवानुवाच

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो

लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।

ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्तिसर्वे

येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥ ६२ ॥

32. *kalo smi lokaksayakrt pravrdho*
lokan samahartum iha pravrttah
rte pi tvaṁ na bhaviṣyanti sarve
ye vasthitah pratyānikesu yodhah

कालः - Time, अस्मि - (I) am, लोकक्षयकृत् - world destroying, प्रवृद्धः - mighty, लोकान् - the worlds, समाहर्तुम् - to destroy, इह - here, प्रवृत्तः - engaged, ऋते - without, अपि - also, त्वाम् - you, न - not, भविष्यन्ति - shall live, सर्वे - all, ये - these, अविस्थिताः - arrayed, प्रत्यनीकेषु - in hostile armies, योधाः - warriors.

The Blessed Lord said :-

32. I am the mighty world-destroying Time now engaged in destroying the worlds. Even without you, none of the warriors arrayed in hostile armies shall live.

No construction of a thing is possible without a corresponding destruction of its own previous condition. The world is created by continuous process of destruction. Today has risen up from the graves of yesterday. The childhood dies before the youth is born. And the moment of youth-destruction is the sacred moment when old age

takes its birth. The Power visibly playing all behind constructive destructions is the fundamental Power that rules over things and governs the life of beings. Krishna here introduces Himself, "*I am the mighty world-destroying Time*" who has manifested to wipe clean the generation that has come to decay in its own false sense-of-values and wrong assumptions on life and its purpose.

The world-destroying attitude of the Lord is not at all against the all-merciful concept. Sometimes mercy is in destruction. A broken bridge, a dilapidated dam or an ancient building are instances in point wherein to pull them down is the most merciful act of charity that considerate Government can do to the community. So too here.

By thus declaring that the very purpose behind this manifestation is to destroy totally the negative forces that have come to strangle the cultural life of the country, Krishna is confirming Arjuna's vague hope that there is yet a chance of victory for his army. Reassuring the very same idea, the Universal Form here declares that in the great mission of reconstruction the Lord is not depending upon any individual or individuals. It is the Time that is going to bring the renaissance, and achieve the revival. In such a colossal movement of universal rehabilitation individuals are but mere creatures of destiny. In spite of them, or with their co-operation, the Time's plans will be worked out. The country needs the revival: the world demands man's rehabilitation. Krishna clearly says, "*Even without you*" none of the warriors manning the secular folly of sheer materialism shall survive the war of the imminent cultural upheaval.

In the context of the Mahabharatha story it almost amounts to saying that the Kaurava forces have all been

already killed by Time and that Arjuna by co-operating and serving the Army of Renaissance is only backing the sure success—betting on the winner.

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व

जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।

मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव

निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥ ३३ ॥

33. *tasmat tvam uttistha yaso labhasva*
jitva satrun bhudnsva rajyam samrddham
mayai vai te nihatah purvam eva
nimittamatram bhava savyasacin

तस्मात् - Therefore, त्वम् - you, उत्तिष्ठ - stand up, यशः - fame, लभस्व - obtain, जित्वा - having conquered, शत्रून् - enemies, भुङ्क्ष्व - enjoy, राज्यम् - the kingdom, समृद्धम् - the unrivalled, मया - by Me, एव - even, एते - these, निहताः - have been slain, पूर्वम् - already, एव - even, निमित्तमात्रम् - a mere instrument, भव - be, सव्य-साचिन् - O left-handed one.

33. Therefore, stand up ! and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. Verily by Myself they have been already slain ; be you a mere instrument, O left-handed Bow-man ! (Arjuna).

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च
कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि माव्यथिष्ठा
युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥ ३४ ॥

34. *dronam ca bhisam ca jayadratham ca
karnam tatha nayan api yodhaviran
maya hatams tvam jahi ma vyathistha
vudhyasva jetasi rane sapatnan*

द्रोणम् - Drona, च - and, भीष्मम् - Bhishma,
च - and, जयद्रथम् - Jayadratha, च - and, कर्णम् -
Karna, तथा - also, अन्यान् - others, अपि - also,
योधवीरान् - brave warriors, मया - by me, हतान् -
slain, त्वम् - you, जहि - do kill, मा - not,
व्यथिष्ठाः - be distressed with fear, युध्यस्व - fight,
जेतासि - shalt conquer, रणे - in the battle, सप-
त्नान् - the enemies.

34. Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other
brave warriors—these have been already slain
by Me ; do you kill . be not distressed with
fear ; fight and you shall conquer your enemies
in battle.

Here Lord Krishna is very directly consoling Arjuna
that he should stand up and catch the time by her fore-lock
and claim the success and glory. Whatever be the might
and strength of the negative forces the all consuming power
of Change has already destroyed them all, and Arjuna has
only to come forward, act the part of a hero and claim the

crown of victory all to himself : *“ I have already slain them ; be merely an apparent cause, you, the left-handed bow-man ”*.

In fact to every thinking man it is an obvious truth that in life he is only at best an instrument in His hands. We are not generally ready to accept this proposition, because, the self-arrogating ego-sense in us will not easily retire, allowing the Diviner in us to plap out in all Its omnipotence. Everywhere, in all our activities, when we analyse each one of our actions, we can find that our actual contribution in them all is a meagre share compared with what nature has supplied and what the unseen-hand has achieved for us. At best we can only make certain required combinations of things, that already exist, and coax out of their own natural qualities and properties a certain resultant and vainfully claim that we have created something new.

The radio, the aeroplane, the roaring engines, the subtle machineries, the wonder-drugs, in short, the entire “ Brave New World ” and all its achievements in progress are all nothing but plays of children in the lap of the Lord, who in fact, is the One who has ordered and let us have electricity, iron, the ether, the air etc , with their special properties. Without these no achievement is ever possible ; and achievements are nothing but an intelligent assembling and reassembling of these very God-given things. Two jugs, one containing some hot water and the other some cold water, are placed by the mother of a child and the child mixes them and gets itself the required lukewarm water. If the little one boasts that he has created or made it, the mother in all her instinctive kindness may, no doubt, congratulate the child, but she knows what is the reality.

The concept of self-surrender and the theory of serving the world in constant awareness of the Lord, are not idle

dreams prescribed for escaping the gross realities of the world. It is essential for man to raise both his calibre and temper so as to work efficiently and achieve solidly in the world. It is the secret technique of keeping oneself constantly in a mood of tireless enthusiasm and joyous inspiration. To the limited ego the world is too much. To the extent the ego is surrendered, in the awareness of the greater and the nobler, to that extent the entire world and achievements therein become a simple game of sure success everywhere. Earlier, in the Geeta, it was, at many points, strictly pointed out that through the technique of self-surrender the greater possibilities can be milked out of us. The same idea is again repeated here. The entire army has been invited here only to play the part of the hero—serve as His Instrument, and claim for himself as his wages the crown and the glory.

Arjuna had certain reasons why he should be particularly afraid of some of the top men in the Kaurava forces. They are taken one by one and the Lord indicates how even those have been already killed by the All-consuming Time-Spirit.

Drona was Arjuna's teacher, who taught him the art of archery. The Acharya had with him some special weapons, and he was particularly revered and respected by Arjuna. The grandsire Bhishma had his death at his own command, and he too had some very powerful celestial weapons. Once in the past, Bhishma had made Parasurama lick the ground. Jayathirtha was invincible inasmuch as his father was engaged in Tapas, firmly resolved that "whoever causes my son's head to drop down on earth, his head too shall fall". Karna also had a powerful missile given to him by Indra. It becomes now clear why these four names are particularly

enumerated by the Lord in the list of personalities that Time had already devastated. Even these impossible warriors have been eliminated by the Principle of Destruction and, thereby, it has been brought home to Arjuna that the field is clear for him to play his part and advance towards the throne and crown, and claim the entire glory as his own.

It is natural that when a burning desire in an individual is fulfilled, he suddenly explodes into an irresistible glorification of his kindly patron.

Samjaya Uvaca :-

संजय उवाच

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य

कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।

नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कुष्णं

सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥ ३५ ॥

35. *etac chrutva vacanam kesavasya
krtanjalir vepamanuh kiriti
namaskrtva bhuya eva ha krsnam
sagadgadam bhitabhitah pranamya*

एतत् - That, श्रुत्वा - having heard, वचनम् - speech, केशवस्य - of Kesava, कृताञ्जलिः - with joined palms, वेपमानः - trembling, किरीटी - the crowned-one, नमस्कृत्वा - prostrating (himself), भूयः - again, एव - even, आह - addressed, कुष्णम् - to Krishna, सगद्गदम् - in a choked voice, भीतभीतः - overwhelmed with fear, प्रणम्य - having prostrated.

Sanjaya Said :-

35. Having heard that speech of Kesava, the crowned-one (Arjuna), with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself, again addressed Krishna, in a choked voice, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

The dramatist in Vyasa, with his deliberate craftsmanship, lifts the scene from the battle front to the quite and silent chambers of the palace, where the blind Dhitarashtra is listening to 'the running commentary' given by Sanjaya. In thus lifting the reader more than once* away from the awe-inspiring atmosphere of Kurukshetra, Vyasa is not only adding a roaring movement to the picture revealed by his pen, but he is also giving a necessary psychological rest for the reader's mind, from such a subtle theme of awful beauty.

It is not to be forgotten at all that Sanjaya in Geeta is "Our own special correspondent", who is fully sympathetic with the righteous cause of the Pandavas. Naturally, therefore, as soon as he reports the Lord's own words—that all the mighty men of the 'times, who are the top-ranking men in position in the Kaurava forces, have been already annihilated—Sanjaya wants to bring to the blind old man's awareness the magnitude of the impending disaster. As we have noticed earlier the only one who could call off the war, even at this moment, was Dhritarashtra himself. And Sanjaya is very anxious to see that the war is not fought. Thus, we see here, in the stanza, in the very language used, the motive of the reporter.

* In this very chapter we are taken three times to the palace and back again to the battle field.

“*Having heard the words of Kesava, Arjuna, the crowned-one, with folded palms and trembling in fear addressed again*”: the very language used and the pictures drawn, reflect the mind of the reporter. Suddenly Arjuna is called here as “the crowned one”, perhaps, as a bold forecast, by which Sanjaya expects Drithrashtra to *see* the folly of the disastrous war. But a blind man can never *see* things: especially when one is intellectually blind with delusion.

If the good sense of the blind king cannot be invoked because of his extremely deluded love for his children, Sanjaya expects to give a psychological treatment to the royal father. Lengthy description of how others are getting frightened is a sure method of spreading panic even among moderately courageous listeners. If Arjuna, the warrior, the bosom-friend of Krishna, is himself “*trembling addressed the Lord in a choked voice overwhelmed with fear*”, Sanjaya expects every sensible man to realise the horrors of the war that is imminent, and the dire consequences that are in store for the vanquished. Even these words of Sanjaya have no effect upon Drithrashtra who is blind to everything except his own mad affection for his own children.

Arjuna apostrophize the Universal Form.. .

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या

जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।

रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति

सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसंघाः ॥ ३६ ॥

Arjuna Uvaca

36 *sthane hrsikesa tava prakṛitya
 jagat prahrasyaty anurajyate ca
 raksamsi bhītāni diso dravanti
 sarve namasyanti ca siddhasamghah*

स्थाने - It is meet, हृषीकेश - O Hrishiksha,
तव - Thy, प्रकीर्त्या - in praise, जगत् - the world,
प्रहृष्यति - is delighted, अनुरज्यते - rejoices, च - and,
रक्षांसि - the Rakshasas, भीतानि - in fear, दिशः -
to all quarters, द्रवन्ति - fly, सर्वे - all, नमस्यन्ति -
bow (to thee), च - and, सिद्धसङ्गाः - the hosts of
Siddhas.

Arjuna Said

36. It is but meet, O Hrishikesha ! that the world
 delights and rejoices in Thy praise ; Raksha-
 sas fly in fear to all quarters, and all the hosts
 of Siddhas bow to Thee.

Again from the luxurious chambers of riches and splendour, the students of Geeta are lifted, on the poetic charm of the Geeta, to the humming roar of the battle-field and to the Wonder-Form of the Lord with Arjuna his hands folded trembling with fear, singing the songs of his adoration, with a throat choked with fear and wonderment. This passage constituted of the following eleven stanzas, represents one of the most beautiful prayers that we have in Hindulism. In fact, the words and the ideas expressed hereunder are so general in their import and significance that we can almost say that no better Universal Prayer can ever be conceived of

to beat this, either in its concept, of beauty or in its cadance or in the depth of import in its words.

In these passages the cognising power in Arjuna is steadily realising the diviner truth behind the details of that Total Form. When one watches and sees one's own reflection in a mirror it is rarely that the observer sees the mirror surface. When one watches the surface of the mirror, the reflection is either not at all available, or at best only slightly recognised. So long as Arjuna is preoccupied with the details in the Universal Form he does not realise or recognise the Infinite which is the very core of the *Viswarupa*. In these passages it is evidently clear that Arjuna has started sensing a deeper meaning that lies behind the cosmic wonder represented to him in his vision Divine.

In the stanza under discussion *Hrishikesa* can be interpreted as "*one with short-clipped hair*"* or as "*the Lord of the Senses*"† In the former case, Arjuna is addressing Krishna, the Universal Form with Its hairs close-clipped, or in the later meaning, which, no doubt is more appropriate with what is to follow, he is addressing the Self, the Lord of the senses. The rest of the lines become quite clear when the term *Hrishikesa* is understood as the Self. The Self is the theme of all invocations, in everyone, in all actions and thoughts. To the extent the Self is revealed and asserted, to that extent animalism, constituting the Rakshasic-forces, must depart. And the good would, naturally, be inspired to bow down in reverence to the Vision of the Self.

"*Why should they bow down?*"

* *Hris-Kesa* *Hrishikesa*.

† *Hrishika-Isha* *Hrishikesa*.

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन्
गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।

अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास

त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत् ॥ ३७ ॥

37. *kasmac ca te na nameran mahatman
gariyase brahmano py adikartre
ananta devesa jagannivasa
tvam aksaram sad asat tatparam yat*

कस्मात् - Why, च - and, ते - they, न - not,
नमेरन् - may prostrate, महात्मान् - O great-souled
one, गरीयसे - greater, ब्रह्मणः - of Brahma, अपि -
also, आदिकर्त्रे - the primal cause, अनन्त - O
Infinite Being, देवेश - O lord of Gods, जगन्निवास -
O Abode of the Universe, त्वम् - Thou. अक्षरम् -
Imperishable, सत् - the being, असत् - non-being,
तत् - that, परम् - the Supreme, यत् - which.

37. And why should they not O great-souled one, bow
to Thee, greater (than all else), the Primal
Cause even of Brahma, O Infinite Being, O
Lord of Lords, O Abode, O Abode of the
Universe, thou art the Imperishable, the
Manifest and the Unmanifest, That which is
the Supreme (that which is beyond Sat and
Asat).

Explaining why the great men of knowledge and wisdom
also cannot but prostrate at the Lord's feet Arjuna tries to
indicate here the majesty and divinity of the Lord in his In-
finite Nature.

“ *Why should they bow down to the Great One* ”-Because the Lord as the Primal Cause of even Creator who creates the entire universe of multiplicity is like the mud in all mud-pots or the gold in all gold ornaments. The ornaments or the pots have no existence at all apart from the gold-essence or the mud-essence in them. Thus the Primal Cause is that which pervades everything and is that which holds together all names and forms. Infinite in nature, the Lord is not only the universe but he is the Lord of all Lords inasmuch as even the denizens of the heavens and the great phenomenal powers—all derive their individual might from the Source of all Powers, this Infinite Truth.

The entire world of things and beings that exist can fall under two categories · the Manifest (*Sat*) and the Unmanifest (*Asat*). The manifest is that which can become objects of experience for the organs of perception, for the instrument of feeling and the equipment of thought. The Unmanifest is that which causes the perceptions, feelings and thoughts to set themselves into particular pattern. These subtle causes that order the individuals live in the world outside are called *Vasanas* and these constitute the Unmanifest. Arjuna’s beautiful definition of the Lord accepts that Lord not only the Manifest (*Sat*) but the Unmanifest (*Asat*) as well. And He is also that which transcends them both.

“ *And that which is beyond them* : In the theatre we can enjoy both the tragedy and comedy, but the light that illumines the stage is that which transcends them both. The wedding-ring is, no doubt, made of gold ;the wedding-necklace is also, no doubt, made of gold. But gold cannot be refined as the necklace and the ring. We will have to say that gold is not only the ring nor the necklace but that which transcends them both, the essential substance in which all gold-ornaments are made. In this sense the Lord, being the

essential truth in all names and forms, He is not only the Manifest and the Unmanifest, but He has got status that transcends both these conditions. In fact that which makes possible both the Manifest and the Unmanifest is the Light of Awareness, the Pure Consciousness, the Universal Lord, whom Arjuna is invoking here.

These few stanzas* represent the most universal prayer that we have got in all the religious literature of the world. There cannot be any creed or caste who have any objection to these, inasmuch, as they summarise in their fold the entire galaxy of philosophic thoughts regarding the Eternal, and expanding with them the devotee's heart can reach to dimensions almost unknowable, yet experientiable.

Arjuna extolls the Lord thus :-

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण
स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम
त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥ ३८ ॥

38. *tvam adidevah purusah puranas*
tvam asya visvasya param nidhanam
vetta si vedyam ca param ca dhama
tvaya tatam visvam anantarupa

त्वम् - Thou, आदिदेवः - the Primal God,
पुरुषः - Purusha, पुराणः - the ancient, त्वम् - Thou,

* From 36-44.

अस्य - of (this), विश्वस्य - of Universe, परम् - the Supreme, निधानम् - Refuge, वेत्ता - knower, असि - (thou) art, वेद्यम् - to be known, च - and, परम् - the Supreme, च -and, धाम -abode, त्वया - by thee, ततम् - is pervaded, विश्वम् - the Universe, अनन्तरूप - O being of infinite forms.

38. Thou art the Primal God, the Ancient Purusha;
Thou art the Supreme Refuge of this universe,
Thou art the knower, the knowable and the Abode. By Thee is the universe pervaded,
O Being of infinite forms.

Continuing in the same strain Arjuna indicates that he considers Krishna now not merely as Sri Gopala Nandan or merely as Sri Vasudevan, but as the very Essence upon which the pluralistic world has been built up. This stanza roars with a charm that is almost compelling.

You are the Primal God:- The Self is the Supreme Creator, inasmuch as the Pure Consciousness is the womb from which even the Creator had arisen. Self, conditioned by Its own creative urge, plays the part of the Creator.

You are the Supreme Abode of the Viswa:- The abode is a place where people take shelter and live in. The entire Viswa is housed in the Lord, and, therefore, it is said that the Lord is the Abode for the Universe. Here, the term *Viswa* is to be rightly understood. When this is translated as the "Universe" we are apt to confuse it with the astronomers' universe or the scientists' universe. The Sanskrit term *Viswa* includes these and even more. It includes the entire world of perceptions and the whole field of emotions and the total realms of thought that we, as intelligent individuals,

come to experience in all our lives. This totality of the world of experience through the body, mind and intellect, together is indicated by the term *Viswa*.

With this understanding of the term *Viswa* it should not be very difficult for the students of Vedanta to understand the full meaning of this line here under discussion. We are all now experiencing our world through the matter equipments of our body, mind and intellect. These being products of inert matter, they have no consciousness of their own, except that which they borrow from the sight of the Infinite, the Self.

These matter envelopments, we have already indicated, are not produced from the Self, as the Self is changeless. The world of matter cannot be said to arise from any other independent source, since the Self is all-pervading and is one without-a-second. Therefore, it is explained that the *Viswa* is but a super-imposition upon the Truth, as the ghost-vision gained on a post. In all such hallucinations the post is the *abode* of the ghost, the emotions which it creates, and the thoughts it generates. There is no truth in the ghost apart from that which it borrows from the post. Thus, it is the Self that is indicated here by Arjuna when he so beautifully sings that the Lord is the 'Supreme abode' for the entire *Viswa*.

Thou art the Knower and the Knowable :- The Awareness in us is the Factor that completes all our experiences as solid realities. If the Light of Awareness were not to illumine the inert world of matter, no knowledge would have been possible, and, therefore, the Principle of Consciousness, painted here as Lord Krishna, the Charioteer—is described here as the Knower. All the techniques of Self-realisation are methods of gathering our Consciousness from all its

channels of dissipation so that, in the still moments of thoughtless Awareness, the Self is automatically recognised. It is thus said as 'the Knowable', realisable or experientiable.

You pervade the entire Universe of forms :- Just as the sweetness pervades all chocolate pieces, as the ocean pervades all waves, the Lord being the essence pervades everything, it is said just now that the super-impositions cannot exist apart from the substratum upon which they are being perceived. The Self is the substratum on which the multitude of the world of plurality is visualised and, therefore it is rightly said that "He pervades all". This is only a repetition of the great Upanishadic Truth that "the Infinite pervades all and nothing pervades it".

No better definition can be so beautifully couched in more mellifluous a language as this stanza does. Poetic genius married to philosophy and living together at the house of Ecstasy is Geeta. And these are stanzas wherein Arjuna forgets his own limitations and sings out, in and through himself, some deeper experiences that he seems to have gained, all of a sudden.

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशङ्कः

प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।

नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः

पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥ ६९ ॥

39. *vayur yamo gnir varuna sasankah
prajapatis tvam prapitmahas ca
namo namas te stu sahasrakrtvah
punas ca bhuyo pi namo namas te*

वायुः - Vayu, यमः - Yama, अग्निः - Agni, वरुणः - Varuna, शशाङ्कः - Moon, प्रजापति - Prajapathi, त्वम् - Thou, प्रपितामहः - great grandfather, च - and, नमः - salutations, ते - to Thee, नमः - salutations, अस्तु - be, सहस्रकृत्वः - thousand times, पुनः - again, च - and, भूयः - again, अपि - also, नमः - salutations, नमः - salutations, ते - to Thee.

39. Thou art Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the moon, Prajapathi and the great-grand-Father, salutations! salutations! Unto Thee, a thousand times and again and again salutations, salutations unto Thee.

So far Arjuna was chanting the glories of the God in His transcendental form. It was shown that the whole universe (*Viswa*) rests in Him and that He is the Essence, the Life-giving Impulse in the entire world of phenomena. A devotee (*Upasaka*) may wonder what exactly is the relationship of the supreme with his particular Lord of the Heart (*Upasya*). The forms and names of deities conceived of, and fervently prayed to, in the ancient times are generally representations of the manifested phenomenal powers.

In the Vedic period *Vayu* (the wind), *Yama* (the Destroyer), *Agni* (the Fire), *Varuna* (the Sea-God), *Sasanka** (the moon), and *Prajapati* (the Creator) were considered as deities for reverence and devotion, concentration and growth

* *Sasanka* (the moon) : literally it means the 'hare marked', indicating the rabbit-like form that is seen as a patch in the moon's face.

in the seekers' inner personality. These Gods were in those days invoked through chantings and worship, through rituals and sacrifices, and, therefore, they were the only popular concepts of God even in the minds of educated. Often times everywhere "means" have a tendency to get misunderstood as the very "goal". Arjuna here, in his true understanding defines the Infinite, the Source of all potentialities, the Lord, as nothing other than Krishna, the Infinite.

The Supreme Lord, in fact, expressing through various functions, Himself comes to play the part of these deities, is an acceptable view from the standpoint of Vedanta. In our own time it is usual for the devotees to invoke the Lord and assert that 'the Lord of their heart' is the Lord of all Lords. To this Lord of all Lords, Arjuna prostrates.

"And..... .."

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते

नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।

अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं

सर्वं समामोषितोऽसि सर्वः ॥ ४० ॥

40. *namah purastad atha prsthatas te*

namo stu te sarvata eva sarva

anantaviryamitavikramas tvam

sarvam samapnosi tato si sarvah

नमः - Salutations, पुरस्तात् - (from) before,
अथ - also, पृष्ठतः - (from) behind, ते - to Thee,
नमः - Salutations, अस्तु - be, ते - to Thee, सर्वतः -
on every side, एव - even, सर्व - O all, अनन्तवीर्यः -
infinite in powers, अमितविक्रमः - infinite in powers,

त्वम् - Thou, सर्वम् - all, समामोषि - pervadest,
ततः - wherefore, असि - (Thou) art, सर्वः - all.

40. Salutations to Thee, before and behind ! Salutations
to Thee on every side ! O All ! Thou, infinite
in power and infinite in prowess, pervadest
all ; wherefore Thou art All.

The Supreme dwells everywhere within, without, above,
below and around, and there is no place where He is not.*
This is not an original idea at all. This has been the constant
war of lived experience in all the great Rishies of the Upani-
shads.

The Lord to whom Arjuna thus mentally prostrates
from all sides is not only an All-pervading Essence like space
in the universe, but the Supreme is the womb from which all
power and daring flow out. Wherever there is some capacity
to act or any achievement noticed it is all a ray of His In-
finite potentiality. The Supreme as existence exists every-
where, and since nothing can exist without existence He as
Pure Existence penetrates all, and in fact He alone is the all.
Ocean alone is all the waves : mud alone is all the mud-pots.

*“ I have been a sinner due to lack of right knowledge of
Thy greatness and so much foolish in the past, Therefore ” :—*

* The same idea is expressed in Mundaka II. 1. ii : ‘‘ Luminous,
subtler than the subtlest. that imperishable Brahman is the above of
the world and all its inhabitants. He is Life, Speech, Mind, Reality,
Immortality That is the mark which should be penetrated by the
mind Penetrated, Oh my Friend ’’. Also the same idea is more or
less expressed in Chandogya Upanishad VII 25.

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं
हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं
मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि ॥ ४१ ॥

41. *sake ti matva prasabham yad uktam*
he krsna he yadava he sakhe ti
ajanata mahimanam tave dam
maya pramadat pranayena va pi

सखा - Friend, इति - as, मत्वा - regarding,
प्रसभम् - presumptuously, यत् - whatever, उक्तम् -
said, हे ! कृष्ण - O Krishna, हे ! यादव - O Yadava,
हे ! सखा - O Friend, इति - thus, अजानता - un-
knowing, महिमानं - greatness, तव - Thy, इदम् -
this, मया - by me, प्रमादात् - from carelessness,
प्रणयेन - due to love, वा - or, अपि - even.

41. Whatever I have rashly said from carelessness or
love, addressing Thee as "O Krishna, O
Yadava, O friend" regarding Thee merely as
a friend, unknowing of this, Thy greatness...

यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि
विहारशय्यासन भोजनेषु ।
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युततत्समक्षं
तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥ ४२ ॥

42. *yac ca vahasartham asatkṛto si
viharasayyanabhojanesu
eko thava py acyuta tatsamaksam
tat ksamaye tvam aham aprameyam*

यत् - Whatever, च - and, अवहासार्थम् - for the sake of fun, असत्कृतः - disrespectfully, असि - (Thou) art, विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु - while at play, on bed, while sitting or at meals, एकः - (when) one, अथवा - or, अपि - even, अच्युत - O Achyutha, तत् - so, समक्षम् - in company, तम् - that, क्षामये - implore to forgive, त्वाम् - Thee, अहम् - I, अप्रमेयम् - Immeasurable.

42. In whatever way I may have insulted Thee for the sake of fun, while at play, reposing, sitting, or at meals, when alone (with Thee), O Achyutha, or in company—that I implore Thee, Immeasurable one, to forgive.

Here are the two beautiful stanzas that bring to the forefront, with a dramatic precision, the exact type of emotions that will naturally be generated in any ordinary man, when he suddenly realises the glory of the Divine. Even in our day-to-day life, a sudden realisation of the exact identity of a person to whom we have been so long talking, brings suddenly an applogitic tone to us. I had had a chance to watch in a railway travel two business men talking to a third person about the irregularities and injustices of the Commerce Department in the country. Later on, after hours of free discussions, to the loving enquiries of the traders, the third man reluctantly had to admit that he was himself the Deputy Minister for Commerce in the then Government.

If you can now imagine the change in the faces of the blushing traders you have rightly understood Arjuna's emotions behind this stanza. Till now he thought Lord Krishna to be nothing more than an intelligent cowherd-boy, whom he had graciously so long patronised by his royal friendship. And with the realisation and re-cognition of Krishna, the sheer mortal in Arjuna prostrates in all loyalty and adoration, and pleads for His Divine mercy and forgiveness.

There is a very intimate personal touch in these two stanzas wherein into the philosophical discussions the emotional touch of a deep intimacy has been brought in. The very effort of the Geeta is to bring the sonorous truths of the Vedas and the Upanishads to the happy tune of the work-a-day world. Great and ponderous Vedantic truths have been suddenly brought down to the easy familiarity of a drawing-room-chat by such frequent psychological touches given by Vyasa's masterly pen. As an intimate friend Arjuna must have in rashness, not knowing Krishna's real Divine nature, called Him familiarly by His pet names.

Again, in the ardency of his friendship he must have insulted or expressed some impropriety to Krishna. For all these Arjuna humbly asks the Lord's forgiveness. These two stanzas together haul up to our gaze the intense love that Krishna and Arjuna had for each other. There is a melodious poetry in the Arjuna-Krishna relationship.

“For.....

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य

त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।

न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतौऽन्यो

लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥ ४३ ॥

43. *pita si lokasya caracarasya
tvam asya puhyas ca gurur gariyan
na tvatsamo sty abhyadhikah kuto nyo
lokatraye py apratimaprabhava*

पिता - Father, असि - (thou) art, लोकस्य - of the world, चराचरस्य - of the moving and un-moving, त्वम् - Thou, अस्य - of this, पूज्य - to be revered, च - and, गुरुः - the Guru, गरीयान् - weightier, न - not, त्वत्समः - equal to Thee, अस्ति - is, अभ्यधिकः - surpassing, कुतः - whence, अन्यः - other, लोकत्रये - in the three worlds, अपि - also, अप्रतिमप्रभावः - O Being of unequalled power.

43. Thou art the Father of this world, moving and un-moving. Thou art to be adored by this world. Thou, the greatest Guru : (for) none there exists who is equal to Thee ; how can there be then another superior to Thee in the three worlds, O Being of unequalled power ?

Giving out his reasons for his utter surrender and for the entire loyalty shown to Krishna, the Eternal Being, Arjuna gives out this stanza. To consider the Lord of Lords as “*the Father in Heaven*” is not the prerogative of any particular religion, and if at all we find it anywhere we can safely conclude, that either it is the instinctive expression of any prophet in expressing the relationship of the Truth with the false world of names and forms, or that it is a direct borrowing from the Hindu scriptures*—the Mother of all religions.

Here we find Arjuna exploding under the pressure of his voiceless emotion his greatest regard for the Lord and addresses him as “*Thou art the Father for the whole world*

constituted of the moving and the unmoving". No doubt, the three worlds—consisting of our experiences in the waking, the dream and the sleep states—are the interpretations of the same eternal from the levels of the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies, and the Truth that illumines these experiences is everywhere one and the same. Naturally, the Lord is, as Arjuna says, "of unequalled greatness", and there is none "Superior to Thee in the three worlds".

"Because it is so . .

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं

प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।

पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः

प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥ ४४ ॥

44. *tasmat pranamya pranidhaya kayam
prasadaye tvam aham isam idyam
pite va putrasya sakhe va sakhyuh
priyah priyaya rhasi deva sodhum*

तस्मात् - Therefore, प्रणम्य - saluting, प्रणिधाय - having bent, कायम् - body, प्रसादये - crave forgiveness, त्वाम् - Thee, अहम् - I, ईशम् - the Lord, ईड्यम् - Adorable, पिता - father, इव - like, पुत्रस्य - of the son, सखा - friend, इव - like,

* Rīg Veda says . "Be of easy approach to us, even as a father to his son. Do thou, O Self-effulgent Lord, abide with us and bring blessings to us." Yajur Veda says : "O Lord thou art our father ; do thou instruct us like a Father." Bible : "Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

सख्युः - of the friend, प्रियः - beloved, प्रियायाः - to the beloved, अर्हसि - (thou) shouldst, देव - O God, सोढुम् - bear.

44. Therefore, bowing down, prostrating my body, I crave Thy forgiveness, adorable Lord ! As a father forgiveth his son, a friend his friend, a lover his beloved, even so shouldst Thou forgive me, O Deva.

Arjuna seems to get an eloquence and a subtler argumentative spirit with the realisation that he is in the presence of the Almighty, the Blessed. Prostration in Hinduism though generally practised as a physical act of touching the feet of the revered, it is a significant act, that is to be actually accomplished in our inward attitude. Surrendering ourselves so that we may rise above ourselves into the spiritual fields is the true prostration. Ego and ego-centric varieties arising out of our false identifications with our material vestures have robbed us of our experience of the Divinity which is already in us. To the extent the misconceptions are annihilated, we, without these outgrowths, come to realise the serener beauty of the Divine, which we, in reality, are in ourselves. In thus surrendering the ego unto the Lord, in fact, we have to bring to His feet nothing but a dirty bundle of animal *vasanas* putrified with our own stupidity and lust. Naturally, a devotee, reaching the feet of the Lord in a spirit of surrender and love, has to apologise for the filth that has been offered as the only royalty at His Divine feet.

Arjuna here is pleading to the Lord to bare with him as a father would his son, as a friend would his friend, as a lover would beloved. These three examples bring within their embrace all types of insult that man can do in his ignorance against his Lord, the Creator.

Arjuna now prays to the Lord to resume his usual form and give up the terrifying aspects of the transcendent and the universal.

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा

भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।

तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं ।

प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ ४५ ॥

45. *adrstapurvam hrsito smi dīstva
bhayena ca pravyathitam mano me
tad eva me darsaya deva rupam
prasida devesa jagannivasa*

अदृष्टपूर्वम् - What was never seen before,
हृषितः - delighted, अस्मि - (I) am, दृष्ट्वा - having
seen, भयेन - with fear, च - and, प्रव्यथितम् -
is distressed, मनः - mind, मे - my, तत् - that,
एव - only, मे - to me, दर्शय - show, देव - O
God, रूपम् - form, प्रसीद - have mercy, देवेश -
O Lord of Gods, जगन्निवास - O abode of the
Universe.

45. I am delighted, having seen what was never seen
before ; and (yet) my mind is distressed with
fear. Show me that previous form only, O
God ; have mercy, O God of Gods, O Abode
of the Universe.

Every devotee comes to all in love with the Lord of his
devotion and thus when from the *form* he gets transcended

to the Infinite and full-nature of the *formless*, that was represented so long by the *form*, every meditator comes to experience, no doubt, an Infinite Joy, but at the wake of it comes to him an emotion of fear. This is an experience that has been lived through by every seeker during the days of his early attempts at peeping over the evil of his own spiritual ignorance. The new realm of joy lived within is, no doubt, absolutely blissful, but a sudden sense of fear exiles him back again to his body-consciousness and the consequent mental agitation.

At the dawn of his experience of the Divine, the limited ego, escaping all its limitations enters into a world unknown to it so far, and it experiences with all joy the vastness of its own dynamism. Arjuna expresses this idea when he says, "I am delighted, having seen what was unseen before." But in the earlier attempts a seeker is not fit to maintain his equilibrium in that Diviner realm, and his mind, seemingly dissolved to enter the still-moment-of-meditation, revives again to flutter into activity, and therein we find almost always that it is the emotion of fear that the mind first experiences, as with a dreadful shudder, it crystalises itself to sink into the welter of the body and the body demands. At this time a devotee identifies with his own emotions of love and devotion and comes to demand of the "Lord of his heart" to manifest in His own sportive form of smiles and softness, of musical words and love-full looks.

What exactly is the form in which Arjuna wanted the Lord to appear before him is described in the following :—

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त
 मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
 तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन
 सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥ ४६ ॥

46. *kiritinam gadinam cakrahastam*
icchami tvam drastum aham tathai va
tenai va rupena caturbhujena
sahasrabaho bhava visvamurte

किरीटिनम् - Crowned, गदिनम् - bearing a mace, चक्रहस्तम् - with a discus in the hand, इच्छामि - (I) desire, त्वाम् - Thee, द्रष्टुम् - to see, अहम् - I, तथैव - as before, तेनैव - that same, रूपेण - of form, चतुर्भुजेन - (by) four-armed, सहस्रबाहो - O thousand-armed, भव - be, विश्वमूर्ते - Universal form.

46. I desire to see Thee as before, crowned, bearing a mace, with a discus in the hand, in Thy former form only, having four arms, O thousand-armed, O Universal Form.

Arjuna makes here an open confession of what he actually wishes : "I wish to see Thee as before." He is afraid of the Universal Form into which the Lord has expanded to express His oneness with the essence in the entire gross-world of matter.

The Vedantic concept of Truth when thus experienced or expressed in its Universal majesty and grandeur, few are of the required intellectual stamina that can conceive the

totality and come to adore it. Even at moments when the intellect could dandle such an idea, the heart of the devotee should often fail to play up its emotion to live the absolute experience for long. The heart needs a heart to fiddle about ; the horse-tail of the bow can tickle out melody only from the strings of instruments. From the mental zone Truth can be conceived of, and enjoyed only through its symbol and not directly from Its total grandeur.

Defining the form of the Vasudeva, in His milder manifestation, Arjuna explains in this stanza the traditional form of Vishnu, the Lord of the Bhagavathas. The concept of God, as represented in the phenomena, has been described in all *Puranas* as having four hands. This may look like a biological freak to students of physiology. We are apt to forget that they are figurative representations symbolising the concept of Truth.

The four-hands of the God-form represent the four facets of the 'inner instrument' in man*.

The Lord Himself, the Self, who wields these four hands is represented everywhere as blue in colour and clothed in yellow. Blue is the colour of the Infinite, and the measureless are always seen blue : just as the summer sky or the deep oceans. Yellow is the colour of the earth. Thus the Infinite clothed in the finite playing the game of life through the four 'inner-instruments' is the symbolism behind Lord Vishnu.

It is also interesting to note that the concept of God in every religion is the same inasmuch as He is the Supreme-most, with all powers and knowledge. Man achieves things

* Mind, intellect, chitta and the ego-sense.

by the strength of his hands and the Lord who is All-powerful can, therefore, be symbolised only by showing that He has four hands. The four symbolical instruments which Lord is represented to carry in his four hands are the club, discus, conch and the lotus. The call of the Divine comes to everyone's bosom when He blows His *conch*, and if man were not to listen to the call of His higher dictates in himself, the *club* follows to punish him, and in spite of that, if man continues his own mistakes, the *discus* chops him down. In case the roar of the conch is obeyed implicitly then he gains the status of the *lotus*, a flower that represents in Hinduism what the white-pegeon and the palm-leaf stand for in the western traditions. Peace and prosperity are the significances the lotus represents in India.

Arjuna, in short, wants the Lord to appear in his serener form and quieter attitude. For all early seekers and new initiates in Vedanta, it naturally becomes difficult to keep the same tempo in themselves for their philosophical fervour. At such moments of dissipation and drowsiness of the intellect the aspiring heart must discover some reposeful resting place wherein it can revive itself. This bed-of-peace and tranquility upon which the inner personality of man can revive and grow into his fullest stature is the glorious Form of the Lord *Saguna* and its worship.

Seeing Arjuna afraid, the Lord withdrew His Universal Form; and consoling Arjuna with His sweet words, He said :

Sribhagavan Uvaca :-

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं

रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।

तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं

यन्मेत्वंदन्येनमदृष्टपूर्वम् ॥ ४७ ॥

47. *maya prasannena tava rjune dam
rupam param darsitam atmayogat
tejomayam visvam anantam adyam
yan me tvadanynenana mdrstapurvam*

मया - By Me, प्रसन्नेन - gracious, तव - to you,
अर्जुन - O Arjuna, इदम् - this, रूपम् - form,
परम् - Supreme, दर्शितम् - has been shown, आत्म-
योगात् - by My own Yoga power, तेजोमयम् - full
of splendour, विश्वम् - Universal, अनन्तम् - end-
less, आद्यम् - primeval, यत् - which, मे - of Me,
त्वं - from you, अन्येन - by another, न - not,
दृष्टपूर्वम् - seen before.

The Blessed Lord said :-

47. Graciously by Me, O Arjuna, this Supreme Form
has been shown to you by My own Yoga
power—full of Splendour, primeval, infinite,
Universal Form of Mine which has never be-
fore been seen by any other than yourself.

Here we have the confession that it is not the privilege
of all the devotees to come to perceive this 'Form-tremend-
ous' and that Arjuna is enjoying It as a special favour of

His Infinite grace. He also asserts that, “*This splendid, primeval, Infinite, Universal Form of mine*” has not been seen by anyone else.

It does not mean that Vyasa, the author of the Geeta, is propounding a new theory, and to substantiate which he is making the Lord, of his own creation, testify the veracity of its Truth. It only means here that this intellectual realisation of the Universal oneness has not been gained by anyone placed in the same circumstances as that of Arjuna in the war-front. Mentally shattered, physically worn out, emotionally upset is the condition of Arjuna and this Arjuna-state is, in fact, far removed from the condition of single pointed intellectual quest, without which the underlying principle of oneness in the multiplicity of the gross world cannot be easily directed. But the Lord of Brindavan had, due to his tremendous powers, given the required ‘eye-of-wisdom’ for Arjuna and made him realise, in a chance moment of mental pause, the vision of the Cosmic-form.

What was there at the back of the mind of the Lord, when he expressed this stanza, is clear from the following :

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानै
न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नुलोके
द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥ ४८ ॥

48. *na vedayajnadhyayanair na danair
na ca kriyabhir na tapobhir ugrair
evamrupah sakya aham nrloke
drastum tvadanyena kurupravira*

न - Not, वेद्यज्ञाध्ययनैः - by the study of the Vedas and Yajna, न - not, दानैः - by gifts, न - not, च - and, क्रियाभिः - by rituals, न - not, तपोभिः - by austerities, उग्रैः - severe, एवरूपः - in such form, शक्यः - (am) possible, अहम् - I, नृलोके - in the world of men. द्रष्टुम् - to be seen, त्वत् - than yourself, अन्येन - by another, कुरुप्रवीर - O great hero of the Kurus.

48. Neither by the study of the Vedas and sacrifices, nor by rituals, nor by severe austerities, can I be seen in this form in the world of men by any other than yourself, O great hero of the Kurus.

Explaining why Arjuna deserves a special congratulation for having gained this extraordinary experience, the Lord says that none can come to 'see' this Universal Form merely because of one's study of the Vedas or on the strength of one's sacrifices. Nor can one gain it by the merits gained through distributing gifts or through performing rituals, or even through constant practice of severe austerities. These are, no doubt, necessary and always helpful in preparing the seeker to realise the essential unity beneath the perceived plurality, but neither a mere book-study nor empty ritualism nor physical tapas in themselves will, as an effect of them, produce this understanding and the final experience. It can come only when the mind is steady. This vision can be illumined only in the clear light of an integrated in-turned intellect.

In thus laughing over the study of the Vedas, performance of sacrifices, distribution of gifts, practice of rituals

and the life of grim penance, Lord Krishna should not be understood as ridiculing these great prescriptions of the Veda. He merely means to say that these are, although means preparatory to the final end, they are not to be confused in themselves as the goal. Cooking, in itself cannot give us any satisfaction of our hunger; but that does not mean that the cooking is unnecessary; after cooking there is, and must be, an eating. It is in this sense that we must understand the stanza, criticising ponderous study and futile efforts of misguided enthusiasts.

For none of the known methods of self development is capable of producing this glorious achievement ; it is said :—

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो
दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं
तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥ ४९ ॥

49. *ma te vyatha ma ca vimudhabhavo
drstva rupam ghoram tdrn mame dam
vyapetabhih pritamanah punas tvam
tad eva me rupam idam prapasya*

मा - Not, ते - thee, व्यथा - fear, मा - not,
च - and, विमूढभावः - bewildered state, दृष्ट्वा -
having seen, रूपम् - form, घोरम् - terrible,
इदम् - such, मम - my, इदम् - this, व्यपेतभीः -
with (Thy) fear dispelled, प्रीतमनाः - with glad-
dened heart, पुनः - again, त्वम् - thou, तत् -

that, एवम् - even, मे - my, रूपम् - form, इदम् - this, प्रपश्य - behold.

49. Be not afraid nor bewildered on seeing such a terrible form of Mine as this ; with thy fear dispelled and with gladdened heart, now behold again this former form of Mine.

Vyasa's dramatic genius cannot but seek its fulfilment wherever an occasion arises. In this conversation between the two there are beautiful indicative phrases and words, which throw a brilliant beam of light upon the stage, illuminating vividly for us the emotions and feelings playing upon the faces of the teacher and the taught. Here is an artistic example of such a fine brush-work accomplished with words by Vyasa on the canvass of the Geeta. Arjuna's emotional agitations are dramatically indicated here when the Lord says, "*Be not afraid nor bewildered having seen this Form of Mine, so terrific*".

Not only that Krishna by words consoles his friend but by his action he helps his Arjuna to emerge out into the sunny fields of consoling comforts and reassuring joys. The Lord here comes back to His original form and announces His entry into it with the words "*Now see again this My former Form*".

This passage which announces the return of the Lord back again into His gentler attitude and loving form, should remind all Vedantic students at least one of the great *Mahavakyas**. The identity between the Universal Form, the terrible totality and the gentle form of Krishna, the Divine

* (1) Tat Twam Asi or Aham Brahma Asmi or Ayam Atma Brahma.

individual, is beautifully brought about by the term “This My former form*”. In fact, the microcosmic representation of Truth, smiling temporarily from an assumed mortal form of Krishna, is Itself the macrocosmic Universal form, where He Himself expresses as the essence in all forms and names. The wave is itself in essence the ocean; and if the ocean is mighty and fierce, terrible and gigantic, as a wave it itself becomes tamed and bashful, loveable and attractive.

The scene again shifts from the Kurukshetra and the war-front to the quiet chambers of the luxurious palace in Hastinapur where the blind old Dhritarashtra is listening to the running commentary given by his minister, Sanjaya.

संजय उवाच

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा

स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।

आश्वासयामास च भीत मेनं

भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥ ५० ॥

Samjaya Uvaca :

50. *ity arjunam vasudevas tatho kiva
svakam rupam darsayam asa bhuyah
asvasayam asa ca bhutam enam
bhutva punah saumyavapur mahatma*

इति - Thus, अर्जुनम् - to Arjuna, वासुदेवः - Vasudeva, तथा - so, उक्त्वा - having spoken, स्वकम् - His own, रूपम् - form, दर्शयामास - showed,

* (2) Tadaeva Me Rupam Idam.

भूयः - again, आश्वासयामास - consoled, च - and, भीतम् - who was terrified, एनम् - him, भूत्वा - having become, पुनः - again, सौम्यवपुः - of gentle form, महात्मा - the great-souled One.

Sanjaya Said :-

50. Having thus spoken to Arjuna, Vasudeva again showed His own Form and the Great-souled One, assuming His gentle Form, consoled him who was terrified.

Sanjaya confirms here to the blind old king that the terrible Universal Form after announcing its intentions of coming back again to its original sweet form had actually accomplished that promise. It has been evidently clear to what form Krishna re-entered : “*The very form in which he had born in the house of Vasudeva*”*. He assumed the pleasant shape of Krishna, the familiar friend of Arjuna, the Blue-Boy of the Gopinis, and thus consoled the mighty warrior who was aghast with wonder and was trembling in fear.

In these words of Sanjaya we also can notice the minister’s anxiety that Emperor, Dhritarashtra, should see the suggestion that the Lord of the Universe is Krishna, and that Krishna is on the side of the Pandavas. But, how can a blind man see?

The scene again shifts to the war-front when Sanjaya reports the words of Arjuna, in the following stanza.

* ‘Vasudeva Grihae Jatam Rupam’—Sankara.

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।

इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥ ५१ ॥

Arjuna Uvaca :

51. *drstve dam manusam rupam
tava saumyam janardana
idanim asmi samvrttah
sacetah prakrtim gatah*

दृष्ट्वा - Having seen, इदम् - this, मानुषम् - human, रूपम् - form, तव - thy, सौम्यम् - gentle, जनार्दन - O Janardana, इदानीम् - now, अस्मि - (I) am, संवृत्तः - composed, सचेताः - with mind, प्रकृतिम् - to nature, गतः - restored.

Arjuna Said :

51. Having seen this Thy gentle human form, O Janardana, now I am composed, and am restored to my own nature.

Arjuna here admits that when he sees the normal and the gentle form of Lord Krishna he feels himself relieved from his inner tensions and agitations. An unprepared student like Arjuna when he is suddenly pushed forward on the spiritual ladder and made to experience truths that are transcendental and thence too mighty for his frail intellect it is natural that even in that realm of bliss he comes to feel the giddy confusion and heaving sobs. Arjuna admits, "I have now become collected in mind and am restored to my normal nature, having seen the milder aspect of Krishna's gracious human form".

True devotion of the Universal Form is explained here-under.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।

देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ॥ ५२ ॥

Sri Bhagavan Uvaca :

52. sudurdarsam idam rupam
drstavan asi van mama
deva apy asya rupasya
nityam darsanakanksinah

सुदुर्दर्शम् - Very hard to see, इदम् - this, रूपम् - form, दृष्टवानसि - thou hast seen, यत् - which, मम - My, देवाः - Gods, अपि - also, अस्य - (of) this, रूपस्य - of form, नित्यम् - ever, दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः - (are) desirous to behold.

The Blessed Lord Said :

52. Very hard indeed it is to see this form of Mine which thou hast seen. Even the Gods are ever longing to behold this form.

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।

शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥ ५३ ॥

53. na ham vedair na tapasa
na danena na ce jyaya
sakya evamvidho drastum
drstavan asi mam yatha

न - Not, अहम् - I, वेदैः - by the Vedas, न - not, तपसा - by austerity, न - not, दानेन - by

gift, न - not, च - and, इज्यया - by sacrifice, शक्य - (am) possible, एवंविधः - like this, दृष्टुम् - to be seen, दृष्टवानसि - (you) have seen, माम् - Me, यथा - as.

53. Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by gift, nor by sacrifice can I be seen in this form as you have seen Me (in your present mental condition).

The Universal Form of the Lord is no easy experience for anyone and it cannot be gained either by study of the Vedas or by austerities or by gifts or by sacrifices. Even gods, the denizens of the Heaven, with their ampler intellects and longer lives, even though striving hard, still remain longing to behold this Universal Form. And yet, Krishna has shown this Form, mighty and wondrous, to His friend, through His Grace, as He Himself had admitted earlier*. One may wonder what decides the Lord to shower His grace upon one and not equally so upon another. It cannot be a haphazard distribution of an Omnipotent who does things as He likes arbitrarily without any rhyme or reason. For, in that case the Lord will be accused of partiality and arbitrariness.

The beauty in Sanskrit words in general and the mastery of Vyasa at his pen in particular, can both be seen here in this stanza, in the one simple word *Sudurdarhanam*. This word is composed of *Su* plus *Du* plus *Darshanam*, where in *Su* stands for 'auspiciousness', *Du* for 'difficult' and *Darshana* for 'sight'. Altogether it means that the vision of

* Ibid—47 'Through My grace this Supreme Form has been shown to you.'

the Total Cosmic Form of the Lord is, no doubt, supremely auspicious, but at the same time it is extremely difficult to gain. In its pregnancy of meaning no other language can even come anywhere near the perfection met with in Sanskrit.

Here, in the following stanza, we get the scientific explanation on what compels the Lord to shower His special favours upon some one at sometimes and not upon all at all times.

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ ५४ ॥

54. *bhaktiya tv ananyaya sakya*
aham evamvidho rjuna
jnatum drastum ca tattvena
pravestum ca paramtapa

भक्त्या – By devotion, तु – indeed, अनन्यया – single-minded, शक्यः – (am) possible, अहम् – I, एवंविधः – of this form, अर्जुन – O Arjuna, ज्ञातुम् – to be known, द्रष्टुम् – to be seen, च – and, तत्त्वेन – in reality, प्रवेष्टुम् – to be entered into, च – and, परंतप – O Parantapa (O Scorcher of thy foes).

54. But by the single-minded devotion, can I, of this Form, be *known* and *seen* in reality, and also *entered* into, O Parantapa (O scorcher of thy foes).

Explaining Himself why Krishna has shown this real Form to Arjuna, which He had not shown to anyone else,

and which is according to the Lord very difficult to gain, the stanza under review is given out. By undivided devotion alone can the Lord be experienced in the totality of the world of objects. Here the term devotion (*Bhakti*) should not be, in our haste, understood in its usual available meaning. Terms have a knack of either gathering new implications or, especially in a living language, terms oft-used suffer from wear and tear.

The term '*Bhakti*' has suffered both ways. It has worn off its deeper implications and has gathered itself a host of superstitious formalities in its embrace.

Devotion as Sankara says*: "No doubt, of the equipments for liberating ourselves the most substantial artillery is *Bhakti*, and identifying ourselves with the Self is called *Bhakti*".

Identification is the truest measure of Love. The devotee forgetting his own individual existence and in his love identifying to become one with his beloved Lord is the culmination of Divine Love. To the Vedantic student who is seeker of the Self, he is spiritually obliged to renounce all his abject identifications with his matter vestures, and to discover his true nature to be that of the Self.

Those who are thus capable of identifying with one unifying Truth that holds together in its web-of-love the plurality, he alone can come to experience, "*Me in this fashion*"—in My Cosmic Form.

The three stages in which realisation of the Truth comes to man are indicated here when the Lord says, "*To know, to*

* Vivekachudamani—stanza : 31—Swamiji's Comentary Page 78.

see and to enter.” A definite intellectual knowledge of the goal and the path is the beginning of a seeker’s pilgrimage—*to know*. Next comes the seeker’s attempt to masticate the ideas intellectually understood through his own personal reflections upon the information which he has already gathered—*to see*. Having thus ‘known’ and ‘seen’ the goal, thereafter, the seeker, through a process of detachment from the false and attachment to the Real, comes to experience the Truth as no object other than himself—*to enter*. By the terms ‘entering’ it is also indicated that the fulfilled seeker becomes the very essence of the sought. The dreamer suffering from the sorrows of the dream, ends it all, when he no more *sees* but *enters* the waking-state to become the waker himself.

How can this entry with Truth be accomplished?

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।

निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ ५५ ॥

55. *matkarmakrñ matparamo*
madbhaktah sangavarjitah
nirvairah sarvabhutesu
yah sa mam eti pandava

मत्कर्मकृत् - Does actions for Me, मत्परम् - looks on Me as the Supreme, मद्भक्तः - is devoted to Me, संगवर्जितः - is freed from attachment, निर्वैरः - without enmity, सर्वभूतेषु - towards all creatures, यः - who, सः - he, माम् - to Me, एति - goes, पाण्डव - O Pandava.

55. He who does actions for Me, who looks upon Me as the Supreme, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who bears enmity towards none, he comes to me, O Pandava,

Having heard that any one can, through undivided devotion, not only understand to recognise the cosmic might of the Lord but that he can come to experience that glory in himself, the anxiety to acquire this status must have been evidently shown up in the face of Pandava Prince. As if an answer to this unasked question from Arjuna, Krishna explains here how one can come to grow towards this life's great fulfilment.

The Krishna-plan for finite man to gain the stature and strength of the cosmic seems to consist of five distinct schemes. This is clear from the conditions required of a seeker that is given in this sloka. They are 1) whose work is all dedicated to the Lord, 2) whose goal is the Lord, 3) who is devotee of the Lord, 4) who is free from all attachments and 5) who is devoid of enmity towards anyone.

In these five schemes we will find an entire line of self-discipline summarised. Detachment from all activities, whether physical or mental or intellectual can take place only when one is constantly thinking of the Self. Enmity is possible only when one considers the outer as separate from oneself. There cannot be an enmity between my own right-hand and left-hand. The awareness of oneness when experienced through the vision of the same Self everywhere, then alone can the total avoidance of enmity with any creature is fully accomplished. Total detachment is an impossibility at the mind-and-intellect level. Mind and intellect cannot live without attaching to some thing or being. Therefore, the seekers first through God-dedicated activity learns to

withdraw all his attachments from other things and invests them all in his rising fervour of devotion as attachment to the Lord. In accomplishing this, all the earlier explained schemes are indeed very helpful.

Thus when the whole scheme is re-evaluated, we can find in it a logic quite acceptable and perfectly psychological. Each subsequent item in the scheme is beautifully supported and nourished by the previous one. From this stanza it is evident, therefore, that the spiritual seeker's great pilgrimage starts with God-dedicated activities. Soon, that God-principle Itself would become his very ideal goal in life. He will develop in himself a consummate life for this glorious goal. Naturally, all his other finite attachments with the world of objects will end, until at last he comes to contact the Self, and having become the Self he recognises himself everywhere in everything, and so, in him there cannot be any sense of enmity at all. Love for all and hatred for none can be considered the *Geeta* "tough-stone" to know the quality of realisation and the intensity of experience a seeker has gained through his Sadhana.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे

श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवाते विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगे

नामैकादशोऽध्यायः ॥ ११ ॥

Ity srimad bhagavadgeetasupanishadsu brahmavidyayam

yogasastre sri Krishnarjunasamvade Viswaroopa

Darsana Yagonama ekadasoadhyayah.

Thus, in the Upanishad of the glorious Bhagavad Geeta,
in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture
of Yoga, in the dialogue between
Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the
eleventh discourse entitled :

THE YOGA OF THE VISION OF THE UNIVERSAL FORM

The chapter is rightly named as the vision of the Universal Form. In the Sanskrit scriptural terminology it is pointed out that the term *Viswa Roopa* used here is actually the *Virat Roopa*. The Self identifying with an 'individual physical body' is he who experiences the waking-state happenings, and in this condition the Self is called by Vedanta as *Viswa*. When the same Self identifies with 'the total physical gross bodies of the universe' in that condition the Self is called the Cosmic—the *Virat*. Here the Lord showed the Form of the Cosmic but the chapter is titled as *Viswaroopa*.

This can be justified in two ways. The Acharya who has supplied us with these epilogues* want to convey to the ordinary readers the Cosmic Form by the familiar term, suggestive in itself to the Indian students, the *Viswaroopa*. Again *Viswa*, as a term in itself, is used in our literature to indicate the total world of experiences that all beings live through at all times either through their physical or mental

* Generally attributed to Madhusudan Saraswati—the great commentator of the Mahabharata.

or intellectual equipments. Therefore, in that literary meaning of the term *Viswa*, it is very appropriate to name the chap as *Viswaroopā* to mean the Total Cosmic Form.

For the rest of the terms in the *Sankalpa Vakya* please refer the exhaustive notes given at the end of chapters one and two.

SREEMAD BHAGAWAD GEETA

CHAPTER XII

Knowing full well the royal hero in Arjuna, Krishna had in the closing of the last Chapter* tickled his kingly ambition. To a true king the challenge of a greater glory is too strong to be resisted. Wherever a vaster field, a greater profit, a more glowing resplendency is recognised, he cannot resist the temptation to fight for it, to conquer it and to bring it within his ruling hand, and thereby spread his unquestioned sway over the conquered domain. Expecting this reaction in his royal friend of endless heroism, Krishna had not only exhibited the Divine glory of the Lord and His Cosmic Form, but he had declared to Arjuna that "through single-minded devotion can this Cosmic Form be known and seen and entered into by anyone". On hearing that this Infinite glory can be his through devotion, the Pandava Prince optimistically determines to make an attempt to conquer and bring to himself this spiritual glory.

Already Arjuna was psychologically prepared to feel this heroic urge and the divine inspiration to make any sacrifice necessary, and to put forth all the efforts needed for the conquest of the spiritual goal. As an intellectual we have found in the last two chapters how Arjuna was hesitant to accept his charioteer as Divine. The Prince

* Chapter XI-54.

demanding an analytical explanation for the Lord's philosophical exposition: "*I am not in them, they are in me*". This was given out earlier,* but the scepticism in the intelligent Arjuna was still too deep to be totally annihilated by a mere physical declaration of the glory of the Divine.

Naturally, the Prince demanded a physical demonstration of the same† and the Lord showed the total Cosmic Form. When once Arjuna thus got totally convinced by the double process of an analytical discussion and a synthetic demonstration of the same, his intellect so convinced surrenders totally in a spirit of aspiration to realise and become the Spirit.

Every individual wants to become and live what he is convinced of; as the thoughts so the man. And, one thus convinced is a greater seeker than a man of blind faith jogging along the thorny path of dull religious habits.

It is a fact that the subtler personality can come to assert itself only when the grosser one is completely satisfied. So long as one is hungry, one's emotional nature remains choking one's heart. When the stomach is full then the heart has the freedom to demand its emotional satisfaction of love and affection. The intellectual being can come to its full play only when the physical and the emotional aspects are at rest—having temporarily at least satisfied. If there is an imperfection or incompleteness either in the physical or in the emotional personality of a man, he is not capable of invoking and directing thereafter the efficient play of his emotional and his intellectual abilities.

* Chapter IX-4.

† Chapter XI.

In the same way the spiritual urge for intuitive experience in a seeker comes to express only when all the earlier and outer demands are fully satisfied. This truth is beautifully brought out to us in the discussions contained in the Chapter on the "Path of Devotion". When intellectually convinced and emotionally satisfied that the Cowherd Boy is the Infinite's own playful manifestation, the scepticism in Arjuna, the soldier, ends and he comes to feel an urge to seek and to discover, to conquer, to possess and to rule over the Kingdom of the Spirit.

If devotion unto the Lord is the tactics by which the Godly Kingdom of the spirit be gained, then the practical minded Arjuna seeks in the Chapter some precise knowledge regarding the techniques of the Divine *Prem*. As a student of Veda from his childhood on Arjuna had gathered that the Absolute or the Infinite is beyond all names and forms eternally existent beyond all perceptions, feelings and understanding. But at the same time he had actually seen in Krishna the whole Universe springing forth and disappearing.

In the Form Terrible, Arjuna had observed the endless thralldom of the past passing through the avenues of the present to reach the courtyard of the future where to meet the Lord of Time—Krishna Himself. Similarly, in the Lord, the Infinite, he saw "here" and "there" mingling with each other, and the farthest horizons nestling in the lap of the "here". Naturally, Arjuna raised the question whether he should seek, love and meditate upon the Infinite Form of the Formless, or can he do so upon the manifested Divinity in the Cosmic Form of Krishna?

The previous two Chapters had completely satisfied the sceptic in Arjuna through their Analytical discussions and

actual demonstration in the Lord's Cosmic Form. The newly converted Royal Prince, now comes to feel an irresistible urge to conquer the Kingdom Divine within himself. The secret strategy for the sure conqueror was also indicated in the concluding stanza of the last Chapter; devotion and consistency of self application, free from all ego-centric attachments with the worlds of objects, is the way charted out in Geeta and it is assured "*He entereth into Me, Oh Pandava*".*

As a practical man-of-action, Arjuna is no idle philosopher seeking a vainful satisfaction in empty erudition and profitless scholarship. He was not at all charmed by the theory as such. The warrior was impatient to enter the field of strife and bring under his sway the realm of glory demonstrated by his charioteer. Therefore, the Chapter starts rightly with a question that means business.

As a student of Veda in his childhood Arjuna was taught that the Absolute is formless and nameless and beyond the perceptions of the sense-organs, feelings of the mind and comprehensions of the intellect. But the Prince had a vivid first-hand experience of Krishna and His Cosmic Form. Naturally the doubt is raised by him as to whether it is more profitable to meditate upon the Truth as unmanifest or as manifest—like the one shown by Sree Krishna.

This question opens up a very mooted point in religion. From time to time prophets and masters had appeared to support or to condemn the worship of the God-Principle in and through a form. Can ocean be fully realised through the knowledge of the waves, or will the knowledge of the waves blot away our comprehension of the Ocean? In

* Chapter XI-55.

short is idol worship justified ? Can it provide helpful props for the meditative mind to swing on and dive into the Infinite. If it can what exactly is the technique? The entire Chapter is dedicated to answer this question.

For its scientific thoroughness and for its wealth of details Geeta can always stand a good comparison with any of the modern text books of secular sciences. Lord Krishna is ever conscious that he is talking to a man-of-action Arjuna, a brainy sceptic.

अर्जुन उवाच

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।

ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ १ ॥

Arjuna Uvaca

*I evam satatayukta ve
bhaktas tvam parvupasate
ye ca py aksaram avyaktam
tesam ke yogavittamah*

एवम् - Thus, सततयुक्ताः - eversteadfast, ये - those, भक्ताः - devotees, त्वाम् - You, पर्युपासते - worship, ये - those, च - and, अपि - also, अक्षरम् - the imperishable, अव्यक्तम् - the unmanifested, तेषाम् - of those, के - which, योगवित्तमाः - better versed in Yoga.

Arjuna Said :—

- 1 Those devotees who, ever-steadfast, thus worship you and those also who worship the imperishable, the unmanifested—which of them are better versed in Yoga?

The philosophical discourses contained in the Divine Song, though written in a conversational style, never overlooks the systematic development of its thoughts, not only within the chapter, but also from chapter to chapter. The last chapter ended with an assurance from the Lord that

any seeker can come to realise the glory of the Cosmic Form if only he can entertain an unwavering devotion. As a prince of royal blood Arjuna must have felt tickled by this great challenge thrown at him. As a practical man of the world he enquires here, as to the form on which he should meditate .

The question is very intelligently put. It is very well known that in the world there are two types of seekers seeking one and the same goal. Some meditate upon the manifested form of the Infinite and others contemplate upon the unmanifested Supreme. Both of them are sincere ; both progress onward. But the question is as to which of those two types belong the greater type of seekers

In philosophy the unmanifest (*Avyakta*) is that which is not directly perceptible for the sense organs (*Akaranagocharam*). The objects that can be brought within the perceptible powers of our sense-organs are called the manifested (*Vyakta*). Arjuna was taught in his early studies of the Vedas that the Supreme was unmanifest and all-pervading. But he had in the previous chapter a personal experience of the Divine Cosmic Form. Naturally the determined prince seeking to understand the right-path of spiritual evolution asks here a pertinent question as to who is a better seeker ; is it the one who devotes himself in love to the Lord-manifest or he who in complete detachment from all external stimuli meditates with ease and poise upon the unmanifested Infinite.

The question crystallises itself to express the great controversy that exists even today in the world. Can the Lord be meditated upon and realised ultimately through idol worship? Can any symbol represent Him? Can a wave represent the ocean?

Explaining the path of meditation on a form representative of the Divine, Krishna, the Infinite, starts his discourse :

श्रीभगवानुवाच

मय्यावेक्ष्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।

श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ २ ॥

Sri Bhagavan Uvaca

2. *mavy evesya mano ye mam
nityayukta upasate
sraddhaya paravo petas
te me yuktatama matah*

मयि - On Me, आवेक्ष्य - fixing, मनः - the mind, ये - who, माम् - Me, नित्ययुक्ताः - ever steadfast, उपासते - worship, श्रद्धया - with faith, परया - (with) supreme, उपेताः - endowed, ते - these, मे - of Me, युक्ततमाः - the best versed in Yoga, मताः - (in my) opinion.

The Blessed Lord Said.

2. Those who, fixing their mind on Me, worship Me, ever-steadfast and endowed with Supreme faith, these in my opinion are best in Yoga.

In this very opening stanza of his reply Krishna points out three unavoidable conditions that are absolutely necessary in order that devotion unto the Lord may yield its promised dividend. Generally there is a feeling that the Path of devotion is a very easy and simple way for self-perfection. In fact no path is easy. It is equally true to say

that no chosen path is difficult for the seeker who has chosen it. Paths are different only because of the vehicles employed: in a boat we can never travel on the grand trunk road, nor can we in a plane sail over the waves, nor on a cycle dash at 60 miles an hour ! There are limitations for each vehicle. But in all of them progress is assured to the intelligent and the careful. Similarly, for self-development each type of seekers according to the vehicle available with them choose either the path of Devotion or the Path of Action or the Path of Knowledge. To each one of them his Path is the easiest.

Fixing their Thought on Me : Thought is the contents of our subtle body. Both the mind and the intellect are nothing but thoughts to wander around and about the concept of the Lord, but it is to actually penetrate, delve into, merge therein and dissolve them in the ideal perfections which the Lord represents. The word that is being used here in the stanza (*Avesya*) indicates not merely a 'thought contact' but it is an actual "thought penetration". In fact human thought takes the form of, gather the fragrance of and even puts on the glow of perfection in, the objects of its contemplation. Thus when a devotee's thoughts gush forward in sincerity, in a new found urge of irrepressible love, towards the Lord of Brindavan the devotee as a personality ends and for the time being enquires to himself the glow and beauty of the Lord of his heart.

Ever self-controlled worship Me : The second condition necessary for a devotee to accomplish his evolution through the Path of Devotion is that he must have sufficient balance in himself to be ever in self-control while worshipping the Lord. Mind by its very nature will always try to run wild from its objects of contemplation and the art of keeping the

thoughts balanced at its point of concentration is called here as self-control. The term in Sanskrit '*Upasana*' though it can be translated as 'worship' should not be misunderstood by its superficial suggestion that automatically comes to us when we hear the word 'worship'. True *Upasana** is an inward act of attunement with the higher principle and getting ourselves completely merged with it.

With Perfect faith : Faith is generally understood as a "blind belief". This is not the *Shraddha* here meant. The term *Shraddha* has been beautifully described by Sri Shankaracharya † as follows :— "That is called the "*spirit-of-faith*" by which an individual understands readily the exact import of the scriptural text as well as of the pregnant words of advice of the Preceptor—by which alone the reality of things becomes clearly manifested". Without this faculty developed in him a devotee may not succeed sufficiently in bringing about a self-divinisation in himself even after years of practice.

* "Sri Shankara defines it as "

उपासनं नाम यथाशास्त्रमुपास्यस्यार्थस्य

विषयीकरणेन सामीप्यमुपगम्य

तैलधारावत् समानप्रत्ययप्रवाहेण दीर्घकालं

यदासनं तदुपासनमाचक्षते ।

"Contemplation (*Upasana*) consists in approaching the object of worship by meditating on it according to the Teachings (*Sastra*) and dwelling for a long time steadily in the current of the same continuous thought like a thread of descending oil".

† Read Talks on *Vivekachudamani* by Swamiji—page 62, stanza 25.

Thus three main conditions are enumerated in this stanza as essential and unavoidable for one to become a true devotee. Perfect faith, ever steadfast in worship and one's mind totally merged with the concept of the Lord are the three conditions, and if these are accomplished in anyone he is considered as the most steadfast devotee by the Lord.

Are not the others, then, the best of Yogis? .. "Wait ; hear now what I have to say regarding them :"

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. *ye tv aksaram anirdesyam
avyaktam paryupasate
sarvatragam acintyam ca
kutastham acalam dhurvam*

ये - Who, तु - verily, अक्षरम् - the Imperishable, अनिर्देश्यम् - the indefinable, अव्यक्तम् - the unmanifested, पर्युपासते - worship, सर्वत्रगम् - the Omnipresent, अचिन्त्यम् - the unthinkable, च - and, कूटस्थम् - the unchangeable, अचलम् - the Immovable, ध्रुवम् - the Eternal.

3. Those who worship the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Immovable and the Eternal.

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ ४ ॥

4 *samniyamye ndriyagramam
sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ
te prapnuvanthi mam eva
sarvabhūtaḥ rataḥ*

संनियम्य - Having restrained, इन्द्रियग्रामम् -
the aggregate of the senses, सर्वत्र - everywhere,
समबुद्धयः - even-minded, ते - they, प्राप्नुवन्ति -
obtain, माम् - Me, एव - only, सर्वभूतहिते -
in the welfare of all beings, रताः - rejoicers.

4. Having restrained all the senses, even-minded everywhere, intent on the welfare of all beings—verily they also come unto Me.

After narrating in the previous stanza the essential conditions under which alone must a devotee practise contemplation upon a manifest form of the Lord to become a steadfast Yogi, here in this two stanzas Lord Krishna is trying to define those who are meditating upon the unmanifest.

Imperishable (*Akshara*) :— All that has got forms and qualities are substances and all substances are perishable. The Imperishable is therefore that which has no qualities. Qualities alone can be perceived, and it implies also that it is impossible for the sense-organs to perceive it.

Indefinable :— Definitions are always in terms of the perceived experiences and when a thing is imperceptible naturally it cannot be defined and distinguished from other things.

All Pervading :— The Infinite that has no qualities, that is not manifest, that which is therefore indefinable should

ecessarily be all-pervading and existing everywhere. If the Supreme can be indicated as not existing in any place then the Supreme will have a particular shape. And that which has got a shape will perish.

Unthinkable — That which can be conceived by a human mind will immediately become the objects of feelings and thoughts and since all objects are perishable the Imperishable must necessarily be inconceivable, incomprehensible and unthinkable.

Unchanging (Kootastha) :— The Self, the Consciousness, remains unchanged even though it is the substratum on which all changes constantly take place. ‘*Koota*’ in Sanskrit is an anvil. Just as the iron blockhead in a smithy’s workshop, without itself changing, allows other pieces of iron to be beaten out on it and changed into any shape, so too, the Consciousness allows our personalities to grow well or ill in contact with It.

Immovable (Achulam) — Motion is change in time-place-system. A thing can move never in itself; it can do so only to a point in place and time where it is *not* already. Here, now, I remain in my chair. I can move to another place to occupy it in the coming minute. But here and now in my own chair myself I cannot move in myself, since I pervade the whole of me. The Infinite is all-pervading and there is no point in place or time where It is not, and, therefore, the Infinite cannot move. It is here, there, everywhere; It has the past, the present and the future in It.

Eternal (Dhruvam) :— That which has change is a thing that is conditioned by time and place. But the Supreme, the substratum for all, at all times and in all places, is the One that supports the very play of time and

space, and, therefore, these cannot condition the Infinite. The Consciousness which is the Infinite Self in us is the same everywhere and at all times. In our childhood, youth and old age, in all places and at all times, and in all conditions of joy and sorrow or of success and failure. It is only when we come down to the levels of our intellect, mind and body, that we step into the Einstein's world with its relative theory in the play of time and space. The Supreme is unconditioned by the time ; It is the ruler of time. It is Eternal.

We must note that all these terms used here are expressions borrowed from our Upanishads to indicate that which provides the Eternal substratum for the ever-changing universe of names and forms, behaviours and happenings, perceptions and feelings, thoughts and experiences. Meditation upon the Lord symbolised-in-the-form demanded three unavoidable conditions.

Having restrained all the senses : To dissipate our energies through the sense-organs is the vulgar hobby of the thoughtless mortal. A seeker who is aspiring to trod the summit of perfection and come to rule over the state of deathless joy must necessarily curtail such dissipations and redirect the energies so conserved for the higher flight. The sense-organs are the real gateways through which the disturbing world of plurality steals into ourselves to storm our inner bosom and plunge us into destruction. It is again through the organs-of action that the mind gushes out into the world-of objects. These two transactions break up our harmonious equipoise and steady balance. Krishna rightly emphasises here that if a meditator were to succeed in the Path of Meditation he must cultivate a habit of living with his senses ever in control.

Always equanimous : The second of the conditions that has been prescribed here by the Lord for a successful meditator is his intellectual equanimity in all conditions and experiences. It is very foolish indeed for a thinker to hope for a condition in life wherein no disturbance from the outer world can reach him to distract his meditation. Such a perfect condition is impossible. The things of the world and their patterns keep on ever changing. In such a kaleidoscopic pattern of existence to expect any desirable system to remain continuously for the benefit of a seeker's steady practice is indeed unintelligent.* Such a thing is impossible. In the world of change, therefore, a seeker must discover his own balance and equipoise by controlling his own intellectual evaluations, mental attachments and physical contacts with the world outside.

That intelligent relationship maintained by seeker towards the world outside whereby he experiences in himself a uniform steadiness in himself, inspite of the mad revelry of things and beings around him, is called the condition of equanimity. One who has developed the right sense of discrimination can easily watch for and see the golden chord of Beauty that holds together all that is enchanting and grotesque in the world outside. This capacity is called *Samabuddhi*.

My child may be dirty at one moment : mischievous at another; screaming in the morning ; laughing in the noon : bulleying in the evening ; and wild in the night. Yet through them all, the father in me sees but the one and the same son, and therefore, he gives his love equally in all

* Read Swamiji's Booklet "Your life is Yours - Make it or Mar it".

these different manifestations of his own son. This is a loving father's *Samabuddhi*. In the same way a true seeker learns to recognise the Lord-of-his-heart in the grinning tragedies, in the smiling comedies, in the boistrous successes, in the sighing sorrows and in the howling failures in his own day-to-day life. Therefore, he becomes equanimous intellectually.

Intent on the welfare of all beings: Enumerating the third of the qualifications necessary for a successful meditator the Lord says that he should be one who is ever self-dedicated in serving his best to all beings. It is impossible for anyone so long as he is in the embodiment to give all his mind and intellect at all times towards the higher contemplation. He must necessarily come in contact with the world and react with it. In all such activities a seeker should be, by the very nature of his philosophy, one who is ever devoted in tirelessly serving the entire living kingdom. Love for the beings becomes his creed; wiping away the tears from my face of life and replacing them by smiles and laughter become his profession and life's fulfilment.

Thus, if the meditators, fixing their mind upon the Imperishable, the Unmanifest, are able to control their sense-organs, keep themselves equanimous and make it their nature to serve others, they too through their meditations "*Reach Me alone*". Krishna declares that they too reach the same goal, the Supreme Self.

The question as raised by Arjuna was rather of a controversial nature. While, Krishna's answer to it is a declaration of an incontrovertible truth. Here, the great divine philosopher points out how both the paths take the practitioner to one and the same goal, and the same general

ules of conduct in their dealing with the world are heerr clearly prescribed for both of them. Whether the devotee is seeking his spiritual unfoldment through meditations upon a personal or an impersonal God the result achieved, it is shown, remains the same, if the disciplines required of him are all fully and faithfully followed.

“ But

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥ ५ ॥

5. *kleso dhikataras tesam*
avyaktasaktacetasam
avyakta hi gatiṛ duhkham
dehavadbhir avapyate

क्लेशः - The trouble, अधिकतरः - (is) greater, तेषाम् - of those, अव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् - whose minds are set on the Unmanifested, अव्यक्ताः - the unmanifested, हि - for, गतिः - goal, दुःखम् - (with) pain, देहवद्भिः - for the embodied, अवाप्यते - is reached.

5 Greater is their trouble whose minds are set on the Unmanifested ; for the goal, the Unmanifested, is very hard for the embodied to reach.

After explaining how the goal reached by all meditators is one and the same Supreme Perfection, Lord Krishna in this stanza tries to compare the two incomparable paths of equal efficiency and merit. He says “ *greater is the toil of*

those whose thoughts are fixed on the Unmanifest". This declaration, when read as such and in itself, is not only an advocacy of the Path of Devotion to a personal-God, but amounts almost to a positive condemnation of meditation upon the Formless. Accepted thus, Geeta would become a scripture that contradicts the eternal wisdom of the Upanishads. And yet, there are local champions of Bhakti who quote this half stanza and beguile the faithful.

The first line is commented upon and elucidated by the following line in the stanza. Lord Krishna explains why it is hard ordinarily for seekers to contemplate upon the Formless. "*The unmanifest is very hard indeed for the embodied to reach*". The crucial word in the stanza '*embodied*' is often very directly understood to mean "all those who have a physical structure". The absurdity of such an understanding would become evident if we follow the natural corollary of such an interpretation. If all those who are having a physical body can meditate only upon the Form of the Lord, then does it mean that the pure meditation upon the Formless is to be undertaken when the body is dropped and the seeker is dead?

Sri Sankaracharya is, therefore, very right in clearly explaining that the "*embodied*" mean "those who are attached to their bodies". Sunk in flesh, if a personality lives a life of sensuality and satisfactions of his body-cravings, to such an individual steady and continuous meditation upon the subtle theme of the Infinite, Formless and All-pervading, would be too difficult. An old man, his vision lost, his hands shaky, may find it very difficult to thread a needle: so too a mind and intellect agitated, panting and restless, suffering from desire-palys is not the vehicle to fly, beyond the

frontiers of names and forms, to the endless yonder of Spiritual Glory.

In short, to the majority of us meditation upon the Lord, as expressed in the Universe, is easier and more profitable. Men can worship the myriad forms through service, undertaken in a spirit of worship and divine dedication. By so doing the body attachments and sense appetites get purged from his inner make-up and his mind becomes subtle enough to conceive and contemplate upon the Formless and the Imperishable Unmanifest.

Even though later on we shall meet with in this chapter the way of life prescribed for men contemplating upon the Unmanifest, hereunder we shall find the disciplines in life for a student who is trying to steady the mind through his devotion for the Manifest Lord:—

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।

अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥ ६ ॥

6. *ye tu sarvani karmani
mayi samnyasya matparah
ananyenai va yogena
mam dhyayanta upasate*

ये - Who, तु - but, सर्वाणि - all, कर्माणि - actions, मयि - in Me, संन्यस्य - renouncing, मत्पराः - regarding Me as the supreme goal, अनन्येन - single-minded, एव - even, योगेन - with Yoga, माम् - Me, ध्यायन्तः - meditating, उपासते - worship.

6. But those who worship Me, renouncing all actions in me, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, meditating on Me with single-minded Yoga ;

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।

भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥ ७ ॥

7, *Tesam aham samuddharta*
mṛtyusamsarasagarat
bhavami nacirat partha
mayy aveitacetasam

तेषाम् - For them, अहम् - I, समुद्धर्ता - the saviour, मृत्युसंसारसागरात् - out of the ocean of the mortal Samsara, भवामि - (I) become, नचिरात् - ere long, पार्थ - O partha, मयि - in Me, अवेशित-चेतसाम् - of those minds are set.

7. For them whose minds are set on Me, verily I become ere long, O Partha, the saviour out of the ocean of finite experiences : the Samsara.

Krishna here prescribes certain definite conditions to be faithfully followed by all meditators upon the Form of the Lord, and concludes that those who are following instructions fully will be saved from their own mortal limitations by the Lord Himself on whose Form they are contemplating. A careful study of these conditions will show us how mentally the devotee grows to a stature so divine and high, thereafterwards he needs no help from anyone in fact. But a seeker in the beginning needs some assurances from

his teacher in order to pump him with the required self-confidence to start his practices.

“Those who worship Me, renouncing all actions in Me”. To renounce all our actions to an Institution, to an Idea or to a Power is to end our individual limitations and identify ourselves with it. Thus an ordinary man, as ambassador of his country becomes a mighty personality in the foreign courts, because he talks, acts, thinks and expresses the will of an entire people. Similarly, one, as a devotee of the Infinite Lord, when one has learnt the art of surrendering oneself totally at the feet of the Lord and acts as a messenger or a representative of the Will of the Lord, one becomes, not only divinely ‘dynamic’, but in and through one’s own activities one becomes constantly aware of the presence and grace of the Universal Spirit.

“Regarding Me as the Supreme Goal”,—A dancer never forgets the rhythm of the drum to which she is to step on. A musician is ever conscious of the background hum. Similarly a devotee is advised here not to take up religion as part-time entertainment or a temporary escapism but to consider the Lord as the Supreme Goal to be achieved in and through life. In short, we are advised that in order to ascend to the higher summits of our cultural perfection it is necessary that we direct all our contacts, transactions, experiences in our life towards the achievement of this cumulative goal of Self-Perfection as symbolised in the Lord of our heart.

“With unswerving Yoga” — Yoga consists in all attempts at our mental attunement with any chosen ideal State of Perfection. To lift our minds from its present agitations and wasteful tendencies towards a greater goal of ampler joy and fuller wisdom is Yoga. This faculty of Yoga is in

everyone of us. At all times we are practising it. But the results in Yoga will depend upon the goal to which we are heaving forward; unfortunately ours is not generally a Divine Goal

Ordinarily our goal keeps on changing and we reach nowhere even though our struggle is continuous. If a holiday-maker has two spots in view and he cannot come to a decision as to which place he is to visit then he can reach neither of them. He would be in helpless confusion travelling up and down the road reaching nowhere and wasting his time and energy. “*Anyā*” means ‘other’; “*Ananya*” means ‘without otherness’, Krishna is advising here *Ananya Yoga* meaning a Yoga in which the goal is ever steady and our mind has no “otherness” about it.

It may be noted here that the mental disintegration can come both because of the otherness in our goal or because of the mind wandering into other channels of pre-occupations.

Thus those (a) who have renounced all actions in Me (b) who regard Me as the Supreme goal and (c) who with a single-pointed mind and goal strive, are the best of my devotees, when their strife, is constituted of meditation (*Dhyana*) and worship (*Upasana*). We have already indicated that *Upasana* is not merely meditation upon a goal but an active becoming one with the goal contemplated upon.

Enumerating thus the conditions necessary for a devotee at his seat of meditation, Krishna assures him that he need not wonder how he will go beyond the shores of sorrow, agitation and imperfections, which are the lot of all mortals. “*I shall be their saviour*” is a divine commandment, a Godly assurance and an infinite guarantee. It is possible that seekers may become rather impatient when even after months

and years of practice they do not come anywhere near any spiritual experience Lord's assurance also indicates the time limit. He says that He will save the seeker from his own imperfection 'ere long' (*Acirath*)

“*To those whose mind is set on Me*” :— The mind generally takes the form of the object it contemplates. When an intergated mind-intellect-equipment of a devotee, through constant practice, gains a capacity of entirely engaging itself with the concept of the Lord, to the exclusion of all other agitations and undivine thoughts, the entire finite mind comes to assume the stature of the Infinite. It is the mind that gives us the hallucination of our ego-centric limitations, and again, it is the mind that rediscovers the Infinitude. Bondage and liberation are both for the mind. The Self is ever free ; ever liberated ; never bound.

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ ८ ॥

8. *Maya eva mana adhatsva
mayi buddhim nivesaya
nivasisyasi mayy eva
ata urdhvam na samsavah*

मयि - In me, एव - only, मनः - the mind,
आधत्स्व - fix, मयि - in Me, बुद्धिम् - (thy) in-
tellect, निवेशय - place, निवसिष्यसि - thou shalt
live, मयि - in Me, एव - alone, अत ऊर्ध्वम् - here-
after, न - not, संशयः - doubt.

- 8 Fix thy mind on Me only, place thy intellect in Me ;
 then (there-after) you shall, no doubt, live in
 Me alone.

Meditation is not a physical act but it is a subtle art accomplished by the inner personality in man. Every seeker must be experiencing, that what his intellect accepts, his heart does not appreciate, and what his heart craves for the intellect laughs at. To bring both the head and heart to the same enchanting Form of thrilled satisfactions would be the secret of harnessing the entire inner man to the spiritual effort. The technique of this art is in this stanza beautifully explained.

“ *Fix thy mind on Me alone* ” :— Mind cannot contemplate on any theme that cannot be conditioned by the senses. Therefore by meditating upon the enchanting Form of the Immortal Flute Player the human mind can readily be made to rest entirely at the feet of the Form. The Lord being all-pervading, He is at once the divine grace behind all names and forms. The mind of a devotee cannot wander thus to any place where he is not reminded of the smile of the Crowned Cowherd-boy !

Merely to ruminate over a decorated marble symbol of the Eternal Child is not in itself sufficient food for the inner personality of man. The intellectual aspect in us is starved, although the heart nestles in satisfaction at the soft feet of the Lord. Any over-development is but ugliness ; perfection is harmony and uniform growth. Therefore, technically it is but true when Geeta advises that the devotee must bring his discriminative intellect to pierce through the stony idol to contact the pulsating Truth it represents.

“ *Pierce the intellect into Me* ” :— to contact thereby the cosmic total intellect which is Lord’s equipment *

Every one of us at any given moment is a sum-total of what we think and what we feel. If our minds are resting on the Lord and our intellect has dived into the very bowels of the Infinite our individuality ends and we merge to become one with the Infinite, the All-pervading. Therefore, the Lord says that “ *Thereafter thou shalt live in Me* ”.

And this statement may look like an exaggeration for the finite mortal who is standing agitated and shy at the gateway to the Temple of Truth. In his habitual conception that he is a finite mortal entity—pressed down under a thousand limitations, suffering from a host of imperfections and persecuted by an army of despairs—he fails to accept that he can rediscover himself to be in himself the ever Divine. Therefore, as a kindly teacher does, Lord Krishna reassures him by affirming directly, “ no doubt ” (*Nasamsaya*),

A typical man of the world, Arjuna, looks up to the Lord starry-eyed, declaring his object helplessness to accomplish these two seemingly simple but practically impossible conditions of meditation. As an alternative the Lord says:

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।

अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनंजय ॥ ९ ॥

*atha cittam samadhatum
na saknosi mayi sthiram
abhyasayogena tato
mam iccha ptum dhanamjaya*

* Refer discussion of *Thajasa & Hiranyagarbha* in Swamiji’s “Discourses on *Mandukya & Karika*”.

अथ - if, चित्तम् - the mind, समाधत्तुम् - to fix,
न - not, शक्नोषि - (thou) art able, मयि - in me,
स्थिरम् - steadily; अभ्यासयोगेन - by the Yoga of
constant practice, ततः - then, माम् - me, इच्छ -
wish, आप्तुम् - to reach, धनंजय - O Dhananjaya.

9. If you are unable to fix your mind steadily on Me,
then by the Yoga of constant practice you do seek
to reach Me, O Dhananjaya.

The technique of self-unfoldment was irrevocably declared by the Lord in the previous stanza. The seeker has to fix his mind totally at the feet of the Lord and bring his intellect to play upon and rip open the significance of the Form Divine. This double act needs an extreme amount of subtlety of the intellect and single-pointedness of the mind. Perhaps Arjuna, felt as any average men would, that this Path is almost impossible for him to pursue successfully. The kindly teacher in Krishna, reading this despair on the face of his disciple, tries to give him an alternative method of self-unfoldment.

“*If you are unable to fix your thoughts steadily on Me*”, then the only practical method would be to pursue the ‘Yoga of constant practice’ (*Abyasa Yoga*). This Yoga of Practice was earlier described* as: “Wherever the mind wanders, restless, from thence let him subdue it and bring it under the sway of the Self alone”. In short, whenever a meditator tries to meditate by fixing his mind upon the chosen point-of-concentration the fickle mind will always try to run wild into dissimilar thought-channels. The advice here is to gather all the rays of the mind, whenever they

* Chapter VI, stanza 26

wander away from their main point-of-concentration, and focus them all again and again at the Divine Form.

Every meditator must admit that this mind fails to steadily balance on, for any length of time, totally engaging itself with the theme of its contemplation. That the mind runs away into a wild wool-gathering is not in itself the tragedy is that the meditator himself gets abducted by the mind and unconsciously follows it into the fields of ready distractions. The Yogeswara here is only advising us not to get enticed away by the mind from our Divine pursuit.

In order to gather the dissipated and riotous mental rays and to focus them at the point-of-concentration the meditator must develop a capacity to stand himself in himself apart from his wandering mind. If we are identified with the mind wherever the mind takes us, we also must go. Therefore, in order to control the mind the meditator must stand apart from the mind, identifying himself with that power in him which has got the ability to rule over and direct the mental energies. This direct controller and ruler of the mind is the higher faculty in man called the intellect. With our discriminating capacity alone can we come to rule over the lesser faculties of the mind in ourselves.

This alternative method suggested by the Lord is to help those who are not able to accomplish the most direct path indicated in the previous stanza. By striving hard in *Abyasayoga* for a length of time, our mind gets so well disciplined that we will be able to practise the immediate method of self-unfoldment advised in the earlier couplet.

Even if this also is not possible then :—

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥१०॥

10 *abhyase py asamartho si
matkar amaparamo bhava
madartham api karmani
kurvan siddhim avapsyasi*

अभ्यासे - In practice, अपि - also, असमर्थः - not capable, असि - (you) are, मत्कर्मपरमः - intent on doing actions for my sake, भव - be, मद्दर्थम् - for my sake, अपि - also, कर्माणि - actions, कुर्वन् - by doing, सिद्धिम् - perfection, अवाप्स्यसि - you shall attain.

10. If also you are unable to practise *Abhyasa* Yoga, be you intent on doing actions for My sake; even by doing actions for My sake, you shall attain perfection.

The thoroughness of the Hindu scriptures is now here so evidently clear as in the exhaustive enumeration of the techniques of self-development advised therein. It is at once so psychologically analytical that the more one studies it the more one is convinced of the path. There is no 'do it or else to hell' sort of threat ever seen anywhere in our great *Sastras*. Any young man available for intellectual conviction and scientific appraisal can get totally convinced of the Hindu way of life

In case a meditator is agitated wild in his mental personality and he is incapacitated even to perform the Yoga of Practice (*Abhyasa Yoga*), Krishna, here, advises him not to struggle hard and bring about thereby unnecessary mental repressions and psychological suppressions. The inner personality is a million times more delicate than an unopened

flower-bud and to hasten its unfoldment is to ruin its beauty and fragrance for ever. Meditation is only an attempt on our part to create the necessary conditions most favourable for an early blossoming of the greater man in us. Naturally, therefore, one who is incapable of performing one kind of practice must be given an alternative method of self-development.

An individual will find it easy to gather his mind from its chosen fields of dissipation only when the mind is gliding *now and then* into unworthy channels along the impression-routes created by his own past actions. But in case a seeker is too full of such impressions and he is, due to them, so extremely extrovert in nature as to make the practice of concentration futile, then he is advised to surrender all his actions unto the Lord in a spirit of dedication. In so doing even the most extrovert man is made to remember the Lord all through his day's activities.

This is the method unconsciously adopted and silently pursued by all fathers towards their new-born child. Every son is born to its father as a stranger. But, in a couple of months the father's love for the child increases and as years roll on, it gathers itself into a magnitude wherein the father comes to live literally in the son. This happens because after the birth of the son all actions and experiences of the father is accompanied by a background memory of the son, an unconscious spirit of dedication towards him.

Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, could not have been more practical as when he advised this path to ordinary average man. It gives a hope even to the most extrovert among us. It is a royal path indeed to the majority of us. Just as a firm's representative while talking always associates himself

with his firm and says “we shall try to supply ; we are producing; we are not responsible” etc , here he identifies himself with the great manufacturers as if he is one of the Directors of the Firm, although, in fact, he is only a low-paid local agent. Similarly, if anyone of us were to really entertain in our mind the firm idea that we are the agents of the Divine, executing His Will in all our external activities, then not only our mind is thereby made to contemplate on the Lord continuously, but we shall be drawing from ourselves miraculous power of efficiency, organisational dexterity and a self assuring courage, in all our undertakings—big or small.

To a student of the ancient Vedic lore as Arjuna was, this statement seemingly so simple may bring along with it a doubt as to its real potency. The orthodox are always suspicious of the unorthodox declarations. Even if it be made by the greatest living man of the era or even by a Divine manifestation with an evident Aura to boot. Therefore, Krishna assures his readers of the efficacy of the path here advocated in the second line..... “*Even by doing actions for My sake you shall attain perfection.*”

Even while boiling some water, we are apt to call it as “making-tea”. Though factually it is a lie, it is the whole truth, for once the water is boiled to make tea does not take much time nor great labour. And therefore, whenever water is boiled with an intention to make tea we generally call the initial act itself by the final goal. Similarly here, by the art of dedicating ourselves totally unto the Lord, in and through all our daily activities and contacts with the outer world, we will be developing in ourselves the Divine *vasanas*, and during our actions we will be exhausting the existing impressions. Such a prepared mind becomes easily

available for the Yoga of practice, and soon it gains sufficient balance and equipoise to contemplate steadily upon the Truth and get itself merged therein.

And supposing even this is not possible?

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् । ११ ।

11. *athai tad apy asakto si
kartum madyogam asritah
sarvakarmaphalatyagam
tatah kuru yatatmavan*

अथ - If, एतत् - this, अपि - also, अशक्तः - unable
असि - (you) are, कर्तुम् - to do, मद्योगम् - My Yoga,
आश्रितः - refuted in, सर्वकर्मफलत्यागम् - the renuncia-
tion of the fruit of all actions, ततः - then, कुरु -
do, यतात्मवान् - self-controlled.

11. If you are unable to do even this then taking
refuge in Me, self-controlled, renounce the
fruits of all actions.

In the previous stanza we were advised to act in the world outside renouncing totally our ego or the sense of a separate, individualised, existence. To the strongly egoistic and self-opinionated ones this is no easy task. Such a man is extremely agitated (Rajasic) with a dash of low impulses (Tamas) poisoning his personality-structure. Even to such seekers, belonging to the lowest conceivable type, Geeta has

a path to advise. Ordinarily such persons would have been a despair in all religions. Even such chronic cases are taken up by the Geeta, treated slowly with simple methods, and finally purified to the highest personality-lustre and efficiency.

If self-dedication unto the Lord in all activities is impossible such individuals are advised here, an equally powerful alternative, atleast to “*abandon the fruit of all actions, and, taking refuge in Me be self-controlled*” in all actions.

Lord Krishna seems to be a hater of all *mere* wage-earners. This is not the Bourgeois-contempt for the labourer or the higher class vanity that makes some look down upon the sweating wage-earners. In a socialistic pattern of society, especially in an era of welfare-State, any educated man must entertain this Krishna-impatience with every worker in the nation who works only for his wage or profit. In such a socialistic scheme of national life, a worker who works only for “higher wages, though less hours of work, and with maximum inefficiency” is a social criminal that deserves to be punished. It is this modern attitude which we see reflected in Krishna’s condemnation of all those who work in the world *merely* for the fruit.

“Fruit of an action” is the action of the present moment maturing itself in a future period of time. To day if I plough and sow the seeds the profit in my harvest would come only after a couple of months. And supposing a farmer broods over the amount of profit that he is to get out of the cultivation and thus wastes his time and effort in dreaming over the possibilities of a success or a failure of the crops, that farmer is surely condemning himself to be an utter failure. Even though this fact is very well-known the

majority of us waste our present chances, opportunities and time in imagining the future. All our energies are wasted in our anxieties and fears of a horrid future which has not yet come . and which may not at all come. Krishna urges us here only to curb these wasteful imaginations and to live vitally, sincerely, fully, and dynamically in the present, shutting off all negative imaginations. Even this act can integrate our personality and make us single-pointed and strong.

The above three stanzas† give us three alternatives which are in fact only three different types of mental medicines to cure the mind of its various distractions. Each one of us has a certain amount of extrovertedness. We differ from each other only in the thickness of the Vasana-layers that we entertain in our inner equipment. When a brass vessel is slightly dim an ash-treatment is sufficient to polish it ; if it is coated with a thicker layer of oxide some acid would be needed. Similarly, here, if the mind is thinly coated with Vasanas the slight distractions created by them can be controlled by the Yoga of Practice. But, if the layer of Vasanas is thick then it can be treated with the Yoga of Action performed in a spirit of Divine dedication. In case the mind is shackled with still thicker layers of Vasanas then the seeker is advised in Geeta to curb his imaginations and act in the world. As I said earlier, nowhere in the world's spiritual literature can we see such an exhaustive treatment of the paths for self-development as in the Geeta.

“Now the Lord extols the abandoning of the fruits of all actions”

† Chapter XII-9, 10 & 11.

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानादध्यानं विशिष्यते ।

ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् । १२ ।

12. *sreyo hi jnanam abyasaj
jnanad dhyanam visisyate
dhyanat karmaphalatyagas
tyagad chantir anantaram*

श्रेयः - Better, हि - indeed, ज्ञानम् - knowledge,
अभ्यासात् - than practice; ज्ञानात् - than knowledge
ध्यानम् - meditation, विशिष्यते - excels, ध्यानात् -
than meditation, कर्मफलत्यागः - the renunciation
of the fruits of the actions, त्यागात् - from renun-
ciation, शान्तिः - peace, अनन्तरम् - immediately.

12. Better indeed is knowledge than practice ; than
knowledge meditation is better ; than medita-
tion renunciation of the fruits of actions ;
peace immediately follows renunciation.

A divine philosopher, when he gives a discourse for the benefit of a confused and broken down disciple, it is not only sufficient that he enumerates the dry philosophical truths but must he so beautifully arrange his ideas that the very scheme of the discourse must help the student to gather all the ideas together in a bunch. The stanza now under review gives us one of the typical examples in Krishna's discourse wherein he directly makes an attempt to systematise a certain volume of his theoretical disquisitions into a well arranged pattern of thought.

Here we shall find a sequence of ideas, arranged in a descending order of importance. This 'ladder of ideas'

when once brought completely within a seeker's comprehension and when he has learnt in himself the art of moving up and down this ladder he has mastered almost all the salient points this Chapter has so far expounded.

“ *Better indeed is knowledge than practice* ”:—Spiritual practices are not a mere physical act but it is a discipline that should ultimately reach our mental and intellectual levels. The inner personality cannot be persuaded to toe the line with the physical acts of devotion unless the practitioner has a correct grasp of what he is doing. An intellectual conversion is a pre-requisite to force a mind to act in the right spirit and to gain for it a perfect attunement with the physical act. A correct and exhaustive knowledge of what we are doing, and why we are doing so, is an unavoidable pre-condition to make our Yoga fruitful. Therefore, it is said here that a knowledge of the psychological, intellectual and spiritual implications of our practices is greater in importance than the very external Yogic acts or devotional performances.

“ *Meditation is more excellent than knowledge* ”.—More important than the mere knowledge is meditation upon the very knowledge so gathered. The technical explanation... of why and what for of the religious practices .. can be easily learnt than understood. To convert our learning into our understanding there must be necessarily a process of intellectual assimilation and absorption. This cannot be accomplished by a mere factual learning of the word-meanings. The student will have to enter, in a hearty spirit of enthusiasm, into the very meaning of the *Sastra*, and this is possible only through long, subjective, independent ponderings over the significant terms in the *Sastra*-declarations. This process of inward assimilation of knowledge can take place only through meditation. Hence in the

hierarchy of importance "meditation" has been given a greater place than the "knowledge of the technique".

"Than meditation is the abandonment of fruit of action : Meditation is an attempt of the intellect to fly from the fields of its present knowledge to a yonder destination of a better understanding. In this flight to a vaster field the intellect must have the necessary energy and equipoise. To an individual in whom all energies and steadiness of mind are shattered, by the agitations created by his own ruinous imaginations of the future, no meditation is ever possible. In our discourses upon the previous stanza we have already shown how our anxiety for the future generally depletes our vitality to face the present. All fruits-of-actions definitely belong to the future and to be over anxious of them is to invite a lot of idle agitations into our bosom. Stormed by these agitations we lose all our equipoise and such an individual has no ability to meditate upon and thereby assimilate the silent significance of the great *Sastras*. Therefore, Krishna here gives to "the spirit of renunciation of the fruits-of-action" a greater place of importance in his ladder of ideas.

As a footnote to his own declaration he adds how renunciation of our anxiety for the future immediately brings about a healthy condition within ourselves. "*Peace immediately follows renunciation*". In fact in Hinduism, renunciation (*Sanyas*) is nothing other than "giving up all our clinging attachments to the pleasures arising out of our contact with the external sense-objects."*

As a result of this renunciation, therefore, a dynamic quietude comes to pervade our bosom in which the intellect

Read Swamiji's Discourses on Vivekachudamani—Page 23, Stanza 8.

can meditate upon the knowledge of the *Sastras* and thereby understand the ways of self-development as explained therein. And with this knowledge when one uses one's seat of meditation, one is assured of definite success and steady progress.

With reference to those who are meditating upon the Imperishable, Infinite, Lord prescribes certain mental and intellectual conduct which forms the direct means to perfection.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखक्षमी । १३ ।

13. *advesta sarvabhutanam
maitrah karuna eva ca
nirmamo nirahamkarah
samaduhkhasukhah ksami*

अद्वेष्टा - Not hating, सर्वभूतानाम् - of (to) all creatures, मैत्रः - friendly, करुण - compassionate, एव - even, च - and, निर्ममः - without mineness, निरहंकारः - without egoism, समदुःखसुखः - balanced in pleasure and pain, क्षमी - forgiving.

13. He who hates no creature, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain and forgiving ;

संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढ निश्चयः ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तःस्समे प्रियः । १४ ।

14. *samtustah satatam yogi
yatatma drudhaniscayah
mayy arpitamanobuddhir
yo madbhaktah sa me priyah*

सन्तुष्टः - Contented, सततम् - ever steady in meditation, योगी - practitioner, यतात्मा - self-controlled, दृढनिश्चयः - possessed of firm conviction, मयि अर्पितमनोबुद्धिः - with mind and intellect dedicated to Me, यः - who, मद्भक्तः - My devotee, सः - he, मे - to Me, प्रियः - dear.

14. Ever content, steady in meditation, self-controlled, possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect dedicated to me, he, My devotee is dear to me.

In these following seven stanzas*, *in six different sections*, Lord Krishna enumerates the characteristic features of a Man-of-perfection, and thereby prescribes the correct mode-of-conduct and way-of-life for all seekers. In these stanzas the Yogeswara has very well succeeded in painting the picture of a true devotee for Arjuna's understanding to comprehend. As a true painter would again and again step back from his canvas to judge his own production, and then go forward to it to lay a few strokes to bring out his theme into more effective relief on his canvas, so too Krishna is trying in these seven stanzas to paint the mental beauty and the intellectual equipoise of a true devotee, along with his relationships with the world around him. No other part in the whole Geeta can be compared with the beauty of execution, that we have in these stanzas except, perhaps, the description of the Man of Steady Wisdom* that we read in the second chapter.

Generally hasty students of Hinduism have learnt to repeat the accusation levelled against Hinduism by the

Chapter XII, Stanzas 13 to 19

Chapter II, Stanzas 55 to 68.

cheap Missionaries, that in the Vedantic concept of an Infinite, Unmanifest, All-powerful, Non-Dual Truth there is no scope for any ethical scruples and moral obligations. In no other religion we shall find the highest moral instructions and the noblest ethical rules so convincingly laid down and insisted upon, as the very foundation of a seeker's spiritual unfoldment, as in the Geeta. And the Geeta is the cream of the Upanishads.

Moral rules and ethical codes of behaviour are in Hinduism, not arbitrary commandments thrust upon its followers by a Son of God or by a Messiah. These rules of conduct are copied from the behaviour of Godmen who have attained the spiritual perfection and had lived among us. Seekers are those who are striving hard to attain the spiritual experience of those saints and seers. A devotee who is trying to attune himself with these masters of Yoga should necessarily start at least copying their external behaviours and mental beauties, which constitute the moral and ethical rules prescribed in our religion.

Thus we find here Krishna painting the physical attitude, the mental balance and the intellectual steadiness of the best of his devotees. This portion, therefore, not only becomes a direct answer to the question raised by Arjuna in the very opening stanza of this chapter, but also gives the Pandava Prince a bunch of positive perfections to be achieved per strife.

Eleven noble qualities are indicated in these two above stanzas which constitute the *opening section*. Everyone of them declares a moral phase of the man-of-perfection's heart. One who has realised that the Spirit everywhere is one and the same, and that spirit alone is his own Self cannot thereafter afford to hate anyone because from his vision of understanding there is none who is other to him.

No living man can afford to hate his own right hand or left leg because in them too he revels. And nobody hates himself

His attitude to all living creatures would be friendly and he is ever compassionate with all. He offers security of life to all beings. He cannot regard anything as his and he is completely free from the notion of egoism. Even-minded in pain and pleasure, he remains supremely unaffected even when beaten or abused. Always content, he discovers a flawless Infinite Joy in himself whether he obtains or not even the means of his bodily sustenance. Steadfast in his meditation, self-controlled and firm in resolve, he lives on joyously, his mind and intellect “ever centered in Me.” “*Such a perfect devoted Yogi*”, the Lord says “*is dear to me.*”

The truth expressed in the stanza earlier* “I am very dear to the man of wisdom and he is dear to Me”, is being more elaborately elucidated in all these seven couplets of this chapter.

“*Moreover... .*”

यस्मान्नो द्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।

हर्षमिर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः । १५ ।

15. *yasman no dvijate loko*
lokan no dvijate ca yah
harsamarsabhayodvegair
mukto yah sa ca me priyah

यस्मात् - From whom, न - not, उद्विजते - is agitated, लोकः - the world, लोकात् - from the world,

* Refer Swamiji's Discourses on Chapter VII, Stanza 17

न - not, उद्विजते - is agitated, च - and, यः - who, हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैः - by (from) joy, envy, fear and anxiety, मुक्तः - freed, यः - who, सः - he, च - and मे -to Me, प्रियः - dear.

15. He by whom the world is not agitated (afflicted), and who cannot be agitated by the world, who is freed from joy, envy, fear and anxiety—he is dear to Me.

This stanza constitutes the *second section* in which again Lord Krishna enumerates three more characteristic features of a real devotee.

“*He by whom the world is not agitated*” :—A man of Perfection is one who will not create any agitations in the world around him. Where the sun is, darkness cannot be ; where the peaceful Master of Equanimity and Perfection dwells, he, by the intrinsic divinity in him, throws, as it were, an atmosphere of serene joy and depthless peace around him, and even those who are agitated in the world when they approach such a master mind loses all their individual agitations and come to enjoy a nameless peace in themselves. In fact the world irresistably rushes to such a saint, there to bask in his brilliance and live the joy which he wafts around him.

“*Who cannot be agitated by the world*”,—Not only does a Man of Perfection quiten the very world around him into a dynamic peace, but the world, however chaotic, revolting, boisterous and vengeful it may be, it cannot create in him any agitations. The world-of-objects will almost always be in a state of flux and its maddening death-dance cannot bring even a whif of its storms to disturb the

calm serenity of the inner mood of the saint. He is made up of stronger metal and his life is built upon deeper foundations.

The floating reeds dance on the surface of the sea but the Lighthouse that is built from the rocks beneath stands erect and motionless watching on the smooth sea turning rough with the rise of the tidal waves. The personality of a Perfect Man is rooted in his realisation of the deeper substratum of life and, since he is not attached with the superficial conditions of matter and its playful magic, any amount of wild agitations outside cannot bring any disturbance to his inward equipoise. In and through the battling circumstances he perceives the changeless Ground—he hears the harmony that hums through the various discordant notes in the life around

“He is completely freed from” all the usual causes for inward agitations such as *“joy, envy, fear and anxiety”*. A devotee of this type ever peaceful with himself and the world, who rules over the circumstances and never yields himself to be victimised by them, who has crossed over the usual weaknesses of the mortal heart—such a devotee *“is dear to Me”*.

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १६ ॥

16. *anapeksah sucir daksa*
udasino gatavyathah
sarvarambhaparityagi
yo madbhaktah sa me priyah

अनपेक्षः - (Who is) free from wants, शुचिः - pure
 दक्षः - expert, उदासीनः - unconcerned, गतव्यथः - un-
 troubled, सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी - renouncing all under-
 takings or commencements, यः - who, मद्भक्तः - My
 devotee, सः - he, मे - to Me, प्रियः - dear.

16. He who is free from wants, pure, prompt, uncon-
 cerned, untroubled, renouncing all undertakings
 (or commencements)—he who is (thus) devoted to
 Me, is dear to Me.

This stanza represents the *third section*, which throws
 more light upon the picture of the Perfect Devotee as
 conceived by the Lord Himself. Already in the above two
 sections fourteen indications were given and to that total
 picture is added in this section another six more subtle
 items.

“Free from dependence” (*Anapekshah*) :—A true
 devotee no more depends upon either the objects of the
 world outside, or their pattern or their relationship with
 himself. An ordinary man discovers his peace and joy only
 in the world-of-objects available for him, their conditions
 and arrangements around him. When the right type of
 objects is in right pattern courting him favourably, a man
 of the world feels he is temporarily thrilled and joyous.
 But a devotee is completely independent of the world
 outside and he draws his inspiration, equanimity and
 joyous ecstasy from a deeper source within himself.

“Who is pure” (*Suci*) :—Dirt has no place anywhere
 within or without a true devotee. One who is aspiring to
 reach perfection will necessarily be so well-disciplined
 physically that he will be clean not only in his behaviour

but also in his relationship with others and even in the very condition and arrangement of his belongings around him. It is very well known that the condition of a man's table or shelf and the cleanness of his apparel can give us a great insight into the mental nature, discipline and culture of that man. Great emphasis has been laid in India on this physical purity not only in the person of the man but of his contacts in the world. Without external purity internal purification will become but a vague dream, an idle hope, a despairing vision.

“Prompt” (*Daksha*):—Promptitude becomes a second nature of an integrated person. Enthusiasm is the key to success in any undertaking. A dynamic person is not one who makes slips always in his behaviour or action. He is mentally agile, intellectually vigorous. Since there is no dissipation in him he is ever on his toes to spring forward to activity once he has determined to take up any endeavour. If we are today observing in our country that idleness, carelessness, and ugliness in execution of any work, are the habits in all religious persons, we can understand how far Hinduism has wandered away from its pristine glory!

“Unconcerned” (*Udaseena*):—It is not very difficult for one to walk out and observe many devotees in this land, who have resigned themselves into a cave of unexpressed sorrows, because, they have been cheated by others, ill-treated by the society and persecuted by the community!! The foolish devotees think that they are to be unconcerned of these malpractices and that their own devotion for the Lord must prove to themselves a wretched liability rather than a positive gain. Philosophy misunderstood can easily end in the suicide of the community.

The unconcerned attitude is only meant here to economise our mental energies. In a human life little difficulties, simple illness, discomforts, wants etc., are but natural. To exaggerate their imports and to strive to escape from them all is to enter into a life-long struggle of adjustments. In all such instances the student is warned not to squander away his mental energies but to conserve them by overlooking these little pin-pricks of life in an attitude of carefree-carelessness.

“*Free from trembling*”:—The inward tremors are experienced only when any burning desire has conquered us completely. Once victimised by a desire or fascination for an object the individual personality becomes tremulous in fear that its desire may not be fulfilled. A true seeker is one who never allows the inner person in him to enter into any such trembling fears or boisterous agitations.

“*Renouncing every undertaking*”:—In Sanskrit (*Arambha*) means “beginning”. “To end all beginnings”, means not, not to undertake anything. This literal translation has made the majority of Hindus incompetent idlers and our religion has become a masterly exposition on the glories of idleness divinised as an idealism!! The deeper suggestions in it are always overlooked. To perceive any definite beginning in an undertaking the individual actor must have a solid and gross egoistic claim to have begun it himself. He must have the strong feeling that he is beginning an activity for the purpose of gaining a definite goal whereby he will be fulfilling a definite desire of his or will thereby come to a positive profit. One who is the seeker of the Divine and striving to reach the higher cultural perfections, must, it is advised here, renounce this egoistic sense of self-importance and work on in the world.

No undertaking in our life, in fact, is a new act that has an independent beginning or end. All actions in the world are in an eternal pattern of the total world-movements. If correctly analysed our undertakings are controlled, regulated, governed and ordered by the available world-of-things-and-situations. Apart from them all, no independent action is undertaken or can be fulfilled by anyone. A devotee of Truth is ever conscious of this oneness of the Universe and, therefore, he will always work in the world only as an instrument of the Lord, and not as an independent agent in the undertaking.

Such a devotee who possesses all these enumerated six qualifications, “*is dear to Me*”.

“*Again.....*”

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

17. *yo na hrsyati na dvesti*
na socati na kanksati
svbhasubhaparityagi
bhaktiman yah sa me priyah

यः - Who, न - not, हृष्यति - rejoices, न - not
द्वेष्टि - hates, न - not, शोचति - grieves, न - not,
काङ्क्षति - desires, शुभाशुभपरित्यागी - renouncing good
and evil, भक्तिमान् - full of devotion. यः - who, सः
he, मे - to me, प्रियः - dear.

17. He who neither rejoices nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing good and evil, full of devotion, he is dear to Me.

A perfect devotee is one who has lifted himself from his world of mind-and-intellect and has awakened to his inner spiritual nature. As such the ordinary experiences of joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, which generally give the restlessness of life, cannot be his.

“*He who neither rejoices*” — ‘Rejoicing’ is that feeling of satisfaction and fulfilment that comes to us on attaining a desired-object which is also extremely desirable.

“*Nor hates*”.—The sense of repulsion that comes to us against undesirable things and circumstances when they crowd round us, is generally the sense of hatred. In short, these two terms indicate that he has neither any desirable objects, the acquisition of which he wishes ardently, nor has he any occasion to fret about on coming in contact with things or situations that are undesirable from his stand point.

“*Neither grieves nor desires*”:— Grief is generally experienced while parting with a beloved object ; and desires are entertained when one yearns to have and to possess for long something unattained at present. A man of Perfection is one whose beloved object, the Self, can never be apart from him. And he has no sense of attachment with any other object. Having attained the Self, his Lord, he has such a complete sense of fulfilment that he has no more any desire for anything that he has not attained. The Self being the all, he has attained everything.

“*Renouncing Good and Evil*”.—The happenings in the world around us can fall under these two categories, according to whether they provide us with joy or sorrow. He who is living away from the realm of the dualistic experiences, and who has learnt the art of drawing his inspiration from

something beyond, to him none of the happenings here at the level of the mind and the intellect can be of any serious consequence.

The above terms, used in the stanza in painting a Perfect Man, have a secret import. If we consider only the literal meaning one would think that Man is a dead corpse: "*neither rejoices, nor hates; nor desires; renouncing good and evil*" he lies dead! This is a very striking example how the literal meanings are not the all that is to be understood in the scriptural declarations.

I dreamt yesterday that in spite of my enemies I got my kingdom back and then desired to annex to my domain my neighbouring kingdom also. At that time my only child died. The war ended in a disastrous defeat. Routed from the battle-fields, all my army shattered, I was flying for my life, pursued by a gang of my enemies Exhausted and weary, panting and perspiring I woke up!!

On awakening, now, I cannot rejoice at the kingdom I got, nor hate my enemies; nor bemoan over my child's death in the dream, nor continue desiring to extend my kingdom. 'Renouncing victory and failure' I live in myself as myself, the awakened. From the waking consciousness viewed, the dream experiences have become a mischievous play of my own mind—a totally unreal delusion.

Similarly, to a true devotee, when he has awakened to the God-consciousness, from his new experience when he re-evaluates life, he cannot rejoice at or hate, grieve at or desire for anything in this world, and he comes to renounce totally the very concepts of good and evil, here below. The Divine Charioteer declares: "*He who is such a devotee is dear to Me.*"

This stanza represents the fourth section in which again the Lord has enumerated six more qualities that make up a Perfect Devotee. So far we have been told of twentysix subtle traits which are the in “intrinsic qualities of a Perfect Yogi.”

“ Lastly.....

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥ १८ ॥

18. *samah satrau ca mitre ca
tatha manapamanayoh
sitosnasukhaduhkhesu
samah sangavivarjitah*

समः - (Who is) the same, शत्रौ - to foe, च - and मित्रे - to friend, च - and, तथा, - also, मानापमानयोः - in honour and dishonour, शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु - in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, समः - the same, संगविवर्जितः - free from attachment.

18. He who is the same to foe and friend, and also in honour and dishonour, who is the same in cold and heat and in pleasure and pain, who is free from attachment ;

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी संतुष्टो येन केनचित्

अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥ १९ ॥

19. *tulyanindastutir mauni
samtusto vena kenacit
aniketah sthiramatir
bhaktiman me privo narah*

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिः - To whom censure and praise are equal, मौनी - silent, संदुष्टः - contented, येन केनचित् - with anything, अनिकेतः - homeless, स्थिरमतिः - steady minded, भक्तिमान् - full of devotion, मे - to me, प्रियः dear, नरः - (that) man,

19 To whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded full of devotion—that man is dear to Me.

“*Equal to foe and friend*”—The estimation of our relationship with another as foe or friend is generally our psychological reaction towards another. It belongs essentially to the heart. It is experienced by the psychological being in us. A man of Perfection is one who is not identifying with his mental estimation of things and, therefore, he is equanimous and maintains a uniformity in his attitude towards his friends or foes.

“*And so too in honour and dishonour*”.—A situation is judged by the intellect as honourable or dishonourable with reference to its own existing values, and cultivated habits of thinking. That which is ordinarily considered dishonourable can itself come to be estimated by the same person as honourable in a new pattern of circumstances ordered by change in time and place. On the whole these are all the different tides in the intellect. And those who are living in that realm are affected by it.

One who is sitting in a small boat set out in the ocean will be buffeted by the waves, but one who is sitting at his own balcony in his sea-shore-castle sits in comfort watching the lot of the boat. A true devotee is one who stays in the spirit and watches the intellect, and, therefore, all through the storms of the intellect he maintains his equanimity.

“*Who is the same in heat and cold*”:—Heat and cold are only the experiences of the body. By remembering the preparation processes of Nitric Acid my thoughts cannot get corroded, by feeling the smoldering beauty of the burning embers in the fire-place my mind cannot get blisters. My knowledge, or my capacity to love cannot freeze at the North Pole; nor get evaporated in the Sahara desert. Heat and cold affect only the body. And this idiom in Sanskrit, whenever it is used in the context of philosophy, represents all types of experiences to which the physical equipment is heir to.

The above three terms thus comprehend the entire possibility of experiences in life—physical, mental and intellectual. In all of them a true devotee is unagitated because he “*is free from attachment*”. Attachment to and identification with the matter equipments—body, mind, intellect—are the causes by which we are helplessly made to dance to the mad tunes which the chance happenings dictate. One who is detached from these equipments is the one who is a master of them.

“*To whom censure and praise are equal*”.—Not that he is immune to insults, nor is it because he is unintelligent enough to understand them. To a great devotee, living as he is in a realm of his own, full of transcendental and blissful experiences of the Divine, to him the worldly censure or even praise has no significance, or importance at all. He realises that one who has been praised today will be censured by the society tomorrow, and the last year’s censured man becomes the praiseworthy leader of today. Praise and censure thus, express in themselves nothing more than the passing fancy of those who are doing them¹

“*He is silent*”:—A true seeker of Wisdom becomes a man of few words not only physically but even mentally. Silence within is real silence (*Mouna*). To Keep physical silence and let loose the mind to talk in itself generally results in a serious type of repression which ultimately drives many to the porch of a mental hospital.

“*Content with anything*”:—Contentment in anything that reaches him accidentally, unasked and unexpected should be the motto of all serious seekers of inward growth. To entertain demands in life and to strive forth to satisfy them would be an unending game as the mind has got a knack of breeding very fast its own demands. The policy of contentment is the only intelligent attitude to be taken up by all sincere seekers, or else there will be no time to seek, to strive and to achieve the diviner goal of life. Self-integration is a reward promised for faithful pursuits and all out attention. It is said in the Mahabharata* “who is clad with anything, who is fed on any food, who lies down anywhere, him the Gods call a Brahmana”.

“*Homeless*”:—Home is generally that which provides shelter, from the external inclemencies of weather, for the resident who is dwelling under its roof. The man of spiritual realisation is one who is trying to pull down all his conditionings and is striving to free himself from all sense of possession and material shackles.

Living under a roof in itself does not make the place a home. To spend a night in a railway station or in the Retiring Room at an Aerodrome does not make the place the traveller's home. It is only along with a sense of possession, reinforced with a sense of happiness and comfort, does the

* Shanti Parva, Moksha Dharma, 245-12

place under a roof becomes a home. A true devotee has for himself a satisfactory shelter only at the Feet of the All-Pervading and, therefore, his mental condition is indicated here by the simple pertinent word, 'homeless'.

Steadfast in his intellectual understanding of the goal, and ever attuning himself with his Divine ideal the Bhakta dwells on, "*That man is dear to Me*". There is almost a suggestion, even though by implication, that one who is at least striving to live these values is a full grown man (*Nara*) to the Gita Acharya.

These two couplets represent the fifth section which enumerates ten more different qualities. In short, in thirty-six artistic strokes Lord Krishna has brought about a complete picture of a Man of Perfection—his relationship with the world outside, his psychological life and intellectual evaluation of the world of beings and happenings.

The enumeration of the various moral, ethical and spiritual qualities of a true devotee is concluded with these :

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।

श्रद्धधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥ २० ॥

20. *ye tu dharmyamrtam idam
yathoktam paryupasate
sraddhadhana matparama
bhaktas te tiva me priyah*

ये - Who, तु - indeed, धर्म्यामृतम् - immortal dharma (Law), इदम् - this, यथोक्तम् - as declared (above), पर्युपासते - follow, श्रद्धधानाः - endued with faith, मत्परमाः - regarding me as their Supreme,

भक्ताः - devotees, ते - they, अतीव - exceedingly, मे - to me, प्रियाः - dear.

20. They indeed, who follow this Immortal *Dharma* (law of life) as described above, endued with faith, regarding Me as their Supreme Goal, they, such devotees, are exceedingly dear to Me.

“*This immortal Law prescribed above*” :—The Sanatana Dharma is summarised in the above lines. To realise the Self and live in that wisdom at all our personality levels—physical, mental and intellectual—is the fulfilment of the life of a Hindu. It is not only sufficient that a Hindu understands this or reads regularly his scriptures or even explains them intelligently. He must be able to digest them properly, assimilate them fully and become the Perfect. Therefore, Bhagavan says that he must be “*endowed with faith*”, where the term ‘faith’ means “the suitable capacity to assimilate spiritual ideas into ourselves through subjective personal experience”.

“*Such devotees are supremely dear to me*”—This concluding stanza of the chapter constitutes the sixth section adding no definite trait to the list of thirtysix qualities already explained. But it forms a commandment, a divine reassurance to all spiritual seekers that when they have accomplished these qualities in themselves, they have come to gain the supreme love of the world.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे भक्तियोगो नाम द्वादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*Ity srimad bhagavadgeetasupanisatsu brahmavidyayam
yogasastre Sri Krishnarjunasamvade Bhakti
yogonama Dwadasodhyayaha.*

Thus, in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Geeta,
in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture of Yoga,
in the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
the twelfth discourse ends entitled :

THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

Refer to our exhaustive explanation of this *Sankalpa Vakya* already given at the end of the first and the second chapters.

Though this chapter is styled as Bhakti Yoga, to read and assimilate it is to cherish true love to the Lord and cure ourselves of the various misconceptions that we have today in our practice of Devotion. The Path of Devotion is not a mere sentimental explosion or an excessive emotional display. It is not a mere frivolous hysteria. It should be a steady inward blossoming of the human personality through the surrender of all our limitations and by acquiring new vitality during the inspired moments of deep contemplation.
